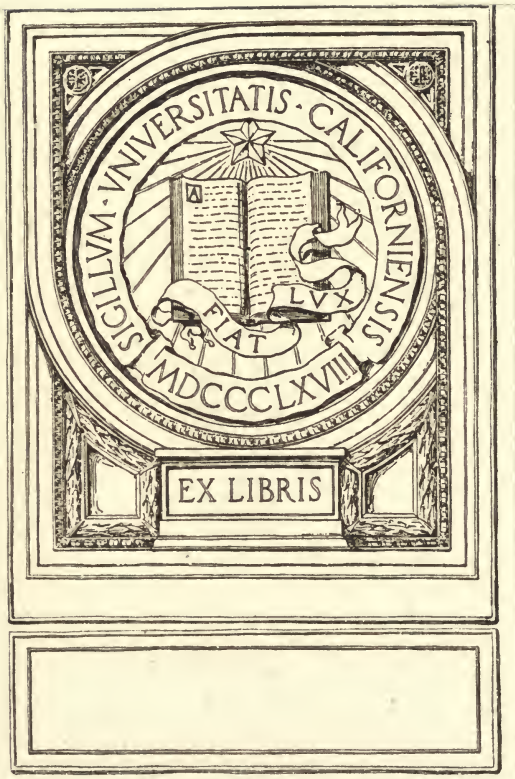
GENERAL FORREST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GENERAL FORREST

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GREAT COMMANDERS

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GENERAL FORREST

BY

CAPT. J. HARVEY MATHES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1902

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PREFACE.

THE writer of the following work served with infantry commands of the Confederate army, mostly as adjutant of a regiment or on brigade staff duty, for nearly four years. It was not his fortune to ride with General Forrest during the war, yet he knew this remarkable character somewhat intimately, as well as members of his staff and hundreds of his men who are still engaged in the activities of private life. From the associations of war and of peace, impressions were formed as to the personality and the mettle of Forrest and the soldiers who made him famous. In the limited space permitted the most salient points have been presented, while many incidents, some of them humorous as well as pathetic and thrilling, have been passed over or only given brief mention. The Rebellion Records, so replete with official reports, as published by the Government with approximate accuracy and fairness; the Memoirs of Generals Grant, Sherman, and Thomas, and numerous other Union officers of lesser rank; the Campaigns of General Forrest, by General Thomas Jordan and John P. Pryor, issued in 1868; the Life of General Forrest, by Dr. John A. Wyeth (1899); The Seventh Tennessee Cavalry, Forrest's old regiment, by John P. Young, of Memphis, and many other publications and papers have been freely consulted in the preparation of this work. The aim has been to gather and put together

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in consecutive order the facts in regard to General Forrest's eventful life from early youth to his death at the comparatively early age of fifty-six. Thanks are returned to General James Grant Wilson for many valuable suggestions as to the scope and spirit of judicial treatment which it is hoped will be found to pervade this volume; to General Marcus J. Wright, of the War Department, for kindly aid in the revision of some chapters; to the surviving members of General Forrest's staff, including especially his son, Captain William M. Forrest, and Lieutenant-Colonel John W. Morton, who was chief of artillery, and to many others of the old command who have lived to enter upon the twentieth century; and also to Captain Alfred G. Tuther, Dr. Joseph P. Alban, General Milton T. Williamson, and other Union officers now living in Memphis, who have kindly supplied interesting facts which were as missing links in the history of some of Forrest's campaigns. Many authorities have been drawn upon and pains taken by correspondence and personal interviews to revive and make available the memories and impressions of old soldiers who were in the campaigns described, wearing either the blue or the gray. If these and such as these can approve the efforts made to do something in the line of reliable and unbiased history, then the earnest desire and patriotic ambition of a Confederate veteran will have been realized.

J. Harvey Mathes.

Memphis, Tenn., *February, 1902.*

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LIEUTENANT-GENERAL FORREST.

CHAPTER I.

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE

BIOGRAPHY is the most instructive and beneficial of all the efforts of the pen. It molds national character and makes states. By it the greatness of individuals is founded. Plutarch's Lives are to this day read most carefully, nay, studied diligently, by the youth whose ambition seeks a career as soldier or statesman.

In a republic it is a matter of special importance that the lives of citizens whose services in peace or war have been distinguished, should be unrolled before their countrymen in the minutest detail possible. Thus the aspiration of the humblest is kindled to emulate. Thus all are informed that great deeds and achievements are within the reach of those who will strive, and that no man's inauspicious conditions of fortune or birth are in the way of a citizen of a free republic who has the means and ability to achieve. Honest, truthful biography is like the flame of the Parsees' altar, ever inviting—as that did to the worship of Deity—the individual to competition in great actions, and the people to the contemplation of grand performances and gratified admiration for their heroes.

Therefore the life of Lieutenant-General Nathan Bedford Forrest. The subject of this work and a twin sister, who was named Fanny, were born on the

13th of July, 1821, near the site of a little place known afterward as Chapel Hill, on Duck River, in Bedford—now Marshall County by change of lines—in Middle Tennessee. They were the first children of humble but respected parents. Their father, William Forrest, was a plain, hard-working blacksmith, of whom nothing especial is known beyond the fact that he was born in Sumner County, Tenn., about the year 1800, and grew up in Bedford County, where he married Miriam Beck, of a Scotch-Irish family, who at an early day had emigrated from South Carolina. William, the father of Bedford, was the oldest son of Nathan Forrest, who was born in Orange County, N. C., and was married in that State to Miss Baugh, of Irish birth or descent. Nathan was the second son of Shadrack Forrest, who lived in western Virginia and was of English parentage. Whether he was born in Virginia or England does not appear. It seems to be accepted as a fact that he was taken to the colony of North Carolina about the year 1730, and near the end of the century removed with his son Nathan and a numerous family of children and grandchildren to Sumner County, Tenn., and thence, two years later, to Bedford County, where he died at an advanced age. Nathan Forrest was the father of eight children—five sons and three daughters. The sons were mostly stock traders, but one was a tailor. They were all men of good character. None of the name can be found in that part of the country now.

From the foregoing brief genealogy it will be seen that Nathan Bedford Forrest came of a blended strain of English, Scotch, and Irish blood, inheriting the qualities of courage, tenacity of purpose, clearness of judgment, and alertness of action which enabled him to ever make the best of trying occasions, and to become one of the famous cavalry leaders of the world.

The Forrests were plain, honest people who were in the vanguard of fearless pioneers advancing from the older settlements along the eastern coasts to the then far West and Southwest. They followed the bridleways of civilization, and the trails of the Indian and the buffalo. It is related of this branch of the family that while they were industrious, temperate, frugal, and in every way honorable and respected by their neighbors, they were not overfortunate in acquiring wealth. The conditions, the hardships, and severe trials of life in a wild, unhealthy country were not easy to overcome. The necessities of life were barely attainable by severest labor and the closest economy. The ordinary comforts of to-day would have seemed then as enervating and unnecessary luxuries.

William Forrest and his wife, the father and mother of Bedford, had their share of toil and care, and like many other poor people, were blessed with a large family of children, consisting of eight sons and three daughters. In 1834 William Forrest, following the tide of emigration ever seeking cheaper lands, removed his family to Tippah County, north Mississippi, and settled near the site of a hamlet which became known as Salem, in the Oklahoma of that period—just vacated by the Chickasaw Indians, and being rapidly occupied by white settlers. The aborigines were slowly and reluctantly disappearing to find new homes west of the Mississippi River. But even after that the dominant, aggressive palefaces had to encounter many hard lines of soil and climate. The new settlers were largely of an adventurous disposition, coming from nearly all the older States. There were no universities to speak of in those days, and but few colleges or other schools worthy of the name. Only a favored and limited number could attend any of these even if so inclined. The average poor boy might pick up a little elementary learning in

such far-apart schools as there were, but unless he had some dream of ambition above the average, or unusual introspection, he was likely to remain in the furrows of every-day life. He might make a good citizen, answer roll-call on muster-day, work the road, or serve on the jury when summoned, pay his taxes, go to church occasionally, attend corn-shuckings, house-raisings, log-rollings, and shooting-matches, and might be elected a justice of the peace or school trustee, or even go to the Legislature for one term; yet in the course of time he would be numbered with his fathers, go to the country church or farm graveyard, and be quickly forgotten.

Nathan B. Forrest grew up in a period when public schools in Tennessee and Mississippi were limited to sessions of not more than three months a year, and often the boys had to stop to sow wheat, haul wood, go to mill, and do other work. It is claimed that the future general went to school three months in Tennessee and three in Mississippi. There were some rich people in those days in a comparative sense, but often these were land poor, and only kept up their credit and financial standing by close management and the increase of slave property. The Forrests were not large landed proprietors or the owners of negroes in the early part of this century, but they were people of good repute, of strong arms and stout hearts, well fitted by nature and experience to lead the way in a new and wild country. No attempt is made here to go into any extensive genealogical research; but it may be taken for granted almost as an axiom that whenever a man even of most obscure origin greatly distinguishes himself above his fellows he has good blood back of him, and is but a reproduction of some strong ancestors. Usually it can be traced, especially on his mother's side, without going very far back; and

Nathan B. Forrest in early life.

so in this instance it appears that Nathan B. Forrest derived more of his aspirations and heroic mold of character from his Scotch-Irish mother than from the worthy blood of his English descent. But be that as it may, he had the will-power and self-assertiveness to rise above the common environments of life and to leave a name on the enduring pages of American history.

It was in 1837 that William Forrest, the hard-working blacksmith, died in Tippah County, Miss. Bedford was then not quite sixteen years old. After that the aim of the boy—the oldest son—seems to have been to care for those dependent upon him and his mother, rather than to become acquainted with books and school-teachers. He worked heroically, and soon met with a fair measure of success. In a few years, however, malarial and typhoid fevers had reduced the family by the death of two sons and three sisters, including Fanny, the twin born with him. Young Bedford was prostrated himself with the prevalent sickness of the country, and lay at death's door for many weeks. But, speaking from the human standpoint, his superior constitution and will-power triumphed, and at the age of twenty he was a sound, stalwart young man, well equipped for the arduous duties of life before him, so far as could then be seen.

Many instances are related of his prowess and decision of character in early youth. On one occasion in Mississippi his mother and her sister, Fanny Beck, returning home on horseback from a visit to a neighbor who lived several miles away, were pursued by a panther. Mrs. Forrest carried a basket of young chickens which the wild beast scented. They ran their horses at full speed, and Miss Beck urged her sister to drop the chickens, but she held on. Coming to a creek near home, at dark, it was necessary to slacken

their speed. There the hungry animal sprang up behind Mrs. Forrest, clawing her frightfully upon the shoulder and neck, and also severely wounding the horse which, wild with the pain and fright, plunged and reared in the water until the panther fell into the stream. The horse died immediately. Mrs. Forrest was badly hurt, and the clothes were torn from her back, but, Scotchlike in tenacity, she held to her chickens. The screams of the women brought out the whole Forrest household, and the loved mother was soon tenderly cared for by young Bedford and others. After that he took down his old flintlock gun, whistled to his hounds, and, in spite of the protests of his mother and all, started after the panther. Following the trail through briers, tangled vines, and dense woods until midnight, the dogs treed the wild beast in the depths of the forests. Waiting patiently until daylight, Bedford discovered the fierce enemy lying flat on a limb, lashing its tail and snarling at the dogs. Then, carefully priming his gun from an old-fashioned powder-horn, he shot the animal through the heart, and it fell dead to the earth. By nine o'clock young Forrest was back at home with the ears and scalp of the panther as a trophy.

At another time, soon after the death of his father, a neighbor's ox committed a series of depredations on the Forrest farm, seriously injuring growing crops, and easily knocking down any fences that stood in the way. Finally the widow's son sent word to the owner that he would shoot the animal if found in his fields again. The man scornfully and angrily returned a message that whoever shot that ox would be shot himself. It was not long before young Forrest discovered the same old forager feeding in his corn-field. Securing his rifle, he made haste to the scene and shot the thief dead. As he finished reloading, the

neighbor, in a towering rage, appeared with his rifle on the outside of the fence. Starting to climb over he heard the second crack of young Forrest's rifle. The bullet whistled by, cutting through his clothes; he fell to the ground on the outside as if shot, and never stopped running until he was safe at home, after which there was no other trouble between the Forrests and their blustering neighbor. Such an affair in the life of the boy gave promise of the man which was in his mature years abundantly fulfilled. Dr. Wyeth says: "Within recent years there was living at Chapel Hill, Tenn., an aged lady who was well acquainted with the family of William Forrest, and she remembers Bedford as a mere child and young boy. But the only peculiarity she could recall of him was that when at play he could make more noise, and when his mother was whipping him he could yell louder, than any child in the neighborhood." This too may have been prophetic of the greater noise he was to make in the world. His good Scotch mother, who cooked her Sunday dinners on Saturday, no doubt had a strong Calvinistic tinge in her character, and believed in the laying on of hands, and her eldest son seems to have learned at an early day that the fiercer the rebel yell the sooner the battle would be over. But there really is not much to be learned of Forrest's boyhood days. He was over forty years old before he began to be famous early in the war, and the people who had known him in his days of poverty, hardships, and obscurity were widely scattered. There were no chronicles in those days of little hatchet stories, or records of the precocious doings and sayings of the backwoods lad, however suggestive these may have been. His life was a hard one, and had never one gleam of romance or bright hope in it until he met, loved, and won the noble woman who became his good angel and con-

trolling spirit all the rest of his days. This event is mentioned in its proper order.

General Forrest's sisters all died early in life. His brothers who grew up to manhood were as follows: John, next to him, who served in the Mexican War, and received a gunshot wound which paralyzed the lower half of his body so that he could only walk on crutches. He was living at the Worsham House, in Memphis, in 1862, when a Union officer with a detachment of men visited his mother's place a few miles northeast of Memphis, and acted in a manner which aroused her indignation. All her other sons were in the army, so next day she came to the city and told John what had occurred. A few days later, as he was sitting in front of the Worsham House, the officer came along, and John charged him with misconduct and threatened to break his crutches over his head. The officer began to abuse the whole Forrest family, when John arose and attempted to strike him, but his crutch was kicked from under him and he fell to the ground. As he lay there he pulled a Derringer and shot the officer, wounding him so severely that he lay at death's door for several weeks, but finally recovered. John Forrest was hustled off to a gunboat in port and placed in irons and solitary confinement. General Forrest sent in a demand for his release or humane treatment until he could have a proper trial. The commanding general complied with this, and John was released upon his own recognizance, as there was certainly no danger of his running away, and he was afterward acquitted. He lived several years after the war.

William Forrest, the third son, a tall captain of scouts during the war, was a large, handsome man, a daring fighter, and was wounded several times. He was very quiet in demeanor, but quick in action, and

in personal difficulties, which he had only on behalf of some weaker friend, was a dangerous antagonist. He led the charge near Days Gap on Sand Mountain upon Streight's daring little army of rough-riders on the last day of April, 1863, and had his thigh-bone shattered by a Minie ball; yet he lived to perform other gallant service, and was in Memphis several years after the war. He died in 1876.

Aaron Forrest, the fourth of these brothers, served as lieutenant-colonel of a Mississippi cavalry regiment, and during the second campaign into West Tennessee and Kentucky, under his brother, died of pneumonia near Dresden, Tenn.

Jesse Forrest, the next brother, was colonel of a regiment, and served with the courage characteristic of his family. He was severely wounded in the attack on Athens, Ala., in 1864. After the war he engaged in business successfully in Memphis, became a prominent citizen, and reared a large family. He has been dead several years.

The sixth and last of the sons of William Forrest and Miriam Beck who became adults, born four months after his father's death, was Jeffrey. He was the pet and pride of his eldest brother, and was given by him every advantage of education up to the beginning of the war. In that respect Jeffrey was the most cultured member of the family, and is said to have been very popular as well as an accomplished gentleman. He had his full share of military genius, became colonel of a cavalry regiment, and while commanding a brigade in his brother's division was shot through the neck and instantly killed at the battle on the prairie near Okolona, Miss., in 1863. He had been commissioned a brigadier-general, but the commission did not reach him before his death.

Six years after the death of William Forrest his

widow was married to Mr. Joseph Luxton, and to them three sons and a daughter were born. Two of the boys, young as they were, went into the Confederate army, making seven of her sons in the service. The youngest Luxton, born in 1848, remained at home some time after the death of his father, though he passed through the lines late in the war. Mrs. Forrest-Luxton has been incorrectly described as a six-footer of herculean frame, high cheek-bones, and of rough, muscular form and manners. The writer remembers to have seen her and formed quite a different impression. He has also talked with Mr. J. M. Coleman, who resides (1902) near Memphis, and was her neighbor while she lived in Shelby County, and with others who knew her as well as Mrs. Luxton. They agree that she was about five feet ten inches in height, and weighed one hundred and eighty pounds. She had dark hair, and, like her oldest son, had bluish-gray eyes, was positive in character, and as a widow was head of her family, but kind-hearted and very pacific and gentle in expression unless aroused to assert herself. She was a strong character, a loved wife and loving mother, and worthy of the race of heroes whom she bore. Soon after the war she removed with her younger children to Texas, where one of her sons, Matthew Luxton, became sheriff of Uvalde County. She died in 1868, and was buried in Navasota.

Taking up the thread of Nathan B. Forrest's ante-bellum life, several interesting facts may be mentioned. After three or four years' hard work on the farm with the assistance of his younger brothers, the family was placed in fairly comfortable circumstances. He often told in later years how he would plow all day and then sit up late at night making buckskin leggings, shoes, and coonskin caps for himself and brothers, for in those days everything the people wore was home-

Forrest's early home in Hernando.

made, and scarcely anything was bought from the country stores except a little sugar and coffee. In 1841, when the people of Texas were engaged in a struggle with Mexico for her independence, young Forrest caught the military ardor of the times and joined a company of volunteers, organized by Captain Wallace Wilson, and in February of that year started from Holly Springs with his comrades for Texas. At New Orleans, however, they were disappointed as to transportation by steamer to Galveston. The company was disbanded, and many of the members returned home; but Forrest and a few others pushed on to Houston, where they found that their services were not required. Some of these ardent young men obtained money from friends and were able to return. Bedford Forrest went to work making rails on a plantation, and when he had earned enough money returned to his home after an absence of four and a half months. Soon after he was prostrated with a fever contracted in Texas. Restored to health, he labored industriously for a year on his mother's farm, and in the meantime became quite a dealer in horses and cattle.

In the autumn of 1842 an uncle, Jonathan Forrest, offered him an interest in an established business of the same kind, including a livery stable in the town of Hernando, twenty-five miles south of Memphis. This he gladly accepted, and remained there for several years. He was successful, and soon able to enlarge his sphere of operations and accumulate some capital. On the 20th of March, 1845, he was drawn reluctantly into a personal and fatal rencontre, which brought him into great local prominence, and made a lasting impression upon all who knew the young man. Hernando was little more than a frontier town, and it was the habit of many people to go armed. His aged uncle had been drawn into a controversy on account of hav-

ing gone on the bond of one James Martin, the guardian of some orphan children. A family named Matlock was involved in some way also. Bedford was drawn into it merely through sympathy. On the morning in question the Matlock brothers—William, James, and Jefferson—accompanied by their overseer, named Bean, came to town and purposed to attack the elder Forrest. Bedford happened to come across the square at the moment, and protested against four men assaulting one. The whole party immediately turned on him and a general fusillade followed. The first shot at Forrest missed; ten others were fired by the attacking party. Young Forrest was wounded, but not seriously. He had only a double-barreled pistol, which he used effectively. A bystander handed him a bowie-knife, and he made a rush for the Matlocks; three of them were wounded, two seriously, and all, with Bean, were driven from the field. In the mêlée Jonathan Forrest, the uncle, came out of his place and received a mortal wound at the hands of Bean, who then turned and fled into an office near by. Bedford Forrest quickly followed, and found Bean hiding under a bed. Dragging him out, Forrest exclaimed: "You deserve death at my hands, but I am too brave a man to murder one so completely in my power; I give you your life;" and then turned him over to the civil authorities.* The sympathy of the community was entirely with Forrest, and after he gave himself up to the officers of the law he was released without bond. The others when arrested were held without bail, and only released after long confinement, vigorous prosecution, and heavy payment of costs and other expenses.

Another incident will serve to illustrate the coolness

* Statement of F. W. Chamberlain, an eye-witness now living in Hernando, Miss., taken by Captain J. A. Loudon, of Memphis, in June, 1900.

and courage of the man and the times in which he lived. Riding one day on the road from Hernando to Holly Springs with Mr. James K. Morse, a prominent lawyer of the former place, they were suddenly met by one James Dyson, a planter of the neighborhood, noted for desperate and bloody deeds, who cherished a mortal grudge against the lawyer. Without one word of warning Dyson raised a double-barreled gun and shot Morse through the heart with a rifle-ball, and then turned the other barrel on Forrest and threatened to shoot him merely because he had witnessed the atrocious murder. Forrest, however, had drawn his pistol and cocked it, and told Dyson to make sure work, for it would be his time next. Dyson lowered his gun and rode off. He said afterward that his remaining barrel was only loaded with buckshot, and he was afraid that he could neither kill nor disable Forrest. He was arrested, vigorously prosecuted by Forrest, and convicted of murder in the first degree; but he had money and was not hanged.

The next great event in the life of Nathan B. Forrest was his dashing courtship and marriage to Miss Mary Ann Montgomery, a woman of gentle blood, of Revolutionary ancestry, good education, and most lovable character. Their meeting was accidental and most romantic. He was riding along a road several miles from Hernando one Sunday morning, and found a carriage and horses with two ladies and the driver stuck fast in the middle of a wide creek. Two young men on their way to church were sitting on their horses near by as interested spectators. Forrest immediately dismounted, waded out to the carriage, and offered to carry the ladies ashore, which he quickly did one at a time. They proved to be Mrs. Montgomery and daughter. Going back into the stream he and the driver succeeded in getting the carriage and horses to

the bank and helped the ladies back to their seats; then, turning upon the tender young men on the horses, he gave them a piece of his mind, and threatened to thrash them both within an inch of their lives if they did not leave at once, and they took the hint. The ladies were profuse in their thanks, and Forrest, introducing himself, asked permission to call on them, which they readily granted. He lost but little time, and when he made his appearance at their mansion a few days later he was surprised and disgusted to find the same two young gentlemen in the parlor, waiting for the ladies, and told them tersely that their room would be worth more than their company. Again they left without standing upon the order of their going. One of them was a minister, or preparing to be such. Forrest was cordially welcomed, and at once fell in love with the beautiful Miss Montgomery. On his second visit he proposed; the lady was surprised, and of course hesitated; he then bluntly told her that if she accepted either of the two young men paying court to her, or any one like them, she would be neglected and left to take care of herself as she was that Sunday in the creek, but that he had a business and would be able to give her a good support. He wound up by declaring he was determined to marry her, and that the next time he came he would bring a minister and marriage license with him; and so he did, and they were married on the 25th of September, 1845, a few weeks after they first met.* Forrest's decision and action in this impulsive love-affair was characteristic of the man. It was a

* Miss Montgomery was born in Middle Tennessee on the 2d of October, 1826, hence was nearly five years younger than the man she married. She was of Virginia ancestry, of Revolutionary stock, and it was understood in her family that she was a descendant of a brother of General Montgomery, killed on the lofty east cliffs of Quebec.

very happy marriage, and they were devoted to each other as long as both lived. They had one son, William, born September 28, 1846, who followed his father into the army at the age of fifteen, and served with him until the surrender, and a daughter, Fanny, born two years after, who died at the age of five years.

Forrest continued to live in Hernando and prospered in business until 1849, when he suffered a severe loss from a venture in the manufacture of brick for the erection of a large academy. This, however, occurred through a breach of trust of an agent in Memphis empowered to draw money from bank. In the same year he removed to Memphis, and became a dealer in real estate and slaves. Among the many narrow escapes of his life may be mentioned one that occurred in the spring of 1852 off the coast of Texas, some business having called him to that State. When this was accomplished he was in haste to return, and near Houston took passage in a weak old steamer, the Farmer, for Galveston. The captain was a drunken, reckless man. Forrest retired early, but was disturbed by a noisy set of gamblers; and getting up to quell the racket, which he did, he was surprised to find the boat in a race with another steamer. The chimneys were red hot, the furnace in a roar, the timbers fairly creaking, and the drunken captain having more fuel thrown under the boilers. His boat was ahead; he was within six miles of Galveston, and swore he would "get there first or blow the old tub and every soul on board to h—ll." Mr. Forrest protested in vain, then walked abaft and waited for the explosion, which soon came with terrific force. The vessel was shattered to splinters and sixty lives, including that of the captain, were lost. The competing racer came up and took off the survivors, Forrest among the others, half-dressed as he had been when he left his stateroom a few moments

before. His only injury was a bruised shoulder, but he aided actively in rescuing the wounded and transferring the dead.

There was some prejudice even in those days in the South against a man known as a negro-trader, although it was as legitimate as horse-trading or any other business. But Forrest, by his integrity and fair dealing and the humane manner in which he treated the slaves in his hands, overcame this feeling to a great degree, and soon acquired the respect and goodwill of the community. Old citizens, who remember so far back, unite in saying that he avoided and refused to allow the separation of negroes of the same family. He took in as a partner Robert L. Balch, who afterward was a private and still later became by election major of Forrest's famous regiment. If only from the motive of self-interest Forrest would have been kind to his slaves. He was a man of strikingly handsome appearance and dressed well; the negroes were proud to belong to him, for he required them to be neat and tidy in appearance, and of course they were well fed and housed. He had a slave-yard enclosed by a high brick wall on Adams Street near Third in Memphis. Continuing on these lines of business, and also maintaining a large sales stable of fine horses until 1859, he had acquired quite a fortune, and disposing mainly of his interests in Memphis he bought two large cotton plantations in Coahoma County, Miss., and one in Tunica County and other real estate. He also was interested with Dr. A. K. Taylor, of Memphis, in another plantation twelve miles above the mouth of the St. Francis River in Arkansas, and the year before the war he raised and marketed one thousand bales of cotton at a net profit of at least thirty thousand dollars.

In 1857 an incident occurred in Memphis which brought Forrest before the people in a new and unex-

pected light. Two men, father and son, Joe and John Able, had lived in the city and rendered themselves notorious as gamblers and by various acts of violence. The father killed a man in a saloon and made his escape. In June of that year John Able, the son, met a man named Everson at the Worsham House, and charged him with having insulted his (Able's) mother. Suddenly and without warning he struck Everson with a pistol which was discharged, and the latter fell, shot through the brain. Able went to jail, but as his character was not the best, and several such deeds had gone unpunished, the people became wildly excited, and soon assembled in great numbers at the Worsham House, resolved upon swift punishment. Bedford Forrest came upon the scene, mounted the balcony, and made a strong talk in favor of moderation and a law-abiding course, and concluded by announcing that a meeting of citizens would be held the next evening at the city hall, Exchange Building, to consider the action best to be taken for the suppression of such acts of violence. This had its effect for the time, and the crowd slowly and sullenly dispersed.

The evening following a large and excited crowd assembled in and around Exchange Building. The mayor presided and Forrest was one of the vice-presidents, but they were in a volcano of human passion. Suddenly a clear, fierce voice rang out: "Oh, let's hang Able and be done with it!" A thousand other voices seconded the motion, and the crowd adjourned in a run for the jail at the foot of Jefferson Street on the levee, only three squares distant. The jailer gave up his keys to the ringleaders, and the young prisoner was brought out half-dressed. A rope was thrown around his neck, and he was hurried up to the navy-yard near by, followed by a bloodthirsty mob. After some little delay the rope was adjusted to a beam, and

all was ready for the swinging. At this moment Forrest, who had remained at the hall to consult briefly with the mayor and other cool-headed, law-abiding citizens, made his way through the crowd and appeared by Able's side. The young man, only twenty years old, a mere boy in appearance, was perfectly cool, and was protesting that he was justified in what he had done, and would be acquitted if allowed a fair trial. His mother and sister had reached him, and were pleading for his life with tears in their eyes. But the infuriated crowd shouted: "Hang him! Hang him!"

This was a moment of supreme crisis. Forrest, as he leaped upon the platform like an athlete, as he was in fact, drew a knife, cut the rope from Able's neck, and announced that he would return the prisoner to the legal authorities. Nothing but the surprising audacity of the act saved Able or even Forrest. A few of the latter's friends rallied around him, and they started for the jail. The dumbfounded ringleaders recovered in a moment and pursued. Forrest dropped behind some lumber-piles with Able and the crowd actually ran over them, sweeping away their little escort and striking with knives and clubs as they went. After the mob swept by, Forrest reached the jail with Able alone, and securing the prisoner safely in his cell, came out to find the mob in force threatening to tear down the building to get their intended victim. Forrest drew his revolver and coolly announced that he would shoot the first man who approached the door. There was no ringleader to face this imperturbable man, and the mob of three thousand slowly melted away. Forrest awoke next day to find himself famous, at least in a local way; the papers were full of the thrilling event, and this man was the hero of the hour. He had vindicated a principle in a time of wild excitement, and set the people to thinking as seldom before.

While Bedford Forrest never had any taste or ambition in a political way, or sought an office, he was in 1858 elected alderman of Memphis and served one year, exercising the excellent judgment and quickness of decision for which he was noted in larger affairs. In 1859 he was reelected, but before the end of his official year, being called away, he resigned. Returning, however, he was rechosen by the board of aldermen, upon whom devolved the selection, as his own successor. He was very watchful of public interests, and enjoyed the fullest confidence of his associates and the people, for he was known to be absolutely and ruggedly honest and fearless. Mayor R. D. Baugh, who was in office when Forrest was alderman, said afterward: "While alderman, General Forrest never offered a resolution to the board on any subject or to carry out any measure, no matter how unpopular it might be at first, that he did not stick to it and work at it until he carried it triumphantly through."

Speaking of Nathan B. Forrest when he was still an alderman, Captain J. A. Loudon, now of Memphis, says: "It was on the wharf at Memphis, in the fall of 1860, that I first met him. The event was dramatic, and made a lasting impression on my mind, as it fully brought out the grand character of the man. My father, Captain John Loudon, had a contract for laying a stone wharf in front of the city, and the work was nearing completion. That portion extending from the foot of Union Street to Beal had been left until toward the last, owing to some springs which it was hoped would be dried by hot weather and thus secure a better foundation. This section was paved, measured, and accepted by the city engineer. Then a sudden rise of the river occurred, and after it receded it was discovered that the stonework had dropped down over the springs. At my father's request the mayor and council

went to examine the work and determine what should be done. I was but a youth, yet deeply interested. They marched by twos, my father and the mayor at the head of the little procession, Nathan B. Forrest and a strong, stout alderman bringing up the rear, and I fell into line behind.

"Presently an alderman near the front dropped out and joined the next set of twos, then the next, and so on to the last. His first words were:

"'Mr. Forrest, we have concluded to condemn the whole of this work.'

"'For what reason do you condemn the whole of this wharf? The portion we have passed has stood and is standing the test admirably, and much better than I thought it would. Why, I remember to have seen mule-drays sink in the quagmire here where we are walking, which is perfectly sound and safe; and remember we have not reached the sunken portion which we have been called upon to inspect.'

"The first speaker answered: 'We have concluded to condemn the whole job; this will break up old man Loudon, and then we can give the work to one of our friends; and we want you to help us.'

"Forrest's bright gray eyes blazed as he turned on the speaker and thundered forth: 'You infernal scoundrel! Do you dare to ask me to be as d——d a rascal as yourself? I have a big notion to pitch you into the Mississippi River. Now, I warn you if you ever presume to address such a damnable proposition to me in future I will break your rascally neck.'

"Every man in the column had halted and heard every word that Forrest said, and after that resumed the march in silence. Reaching the sunken portion, my father explained that the pavement could be made to stand by inserting a honeycomb or open stone sewer to drain the water off under the surface. Mr. For-

rest took the lead in the interview, and my father's proposition was agreed to and the work was repaired and still stands. The alderman who would have swindled my father and turned over the job to some of his friends was silent, and his conspiracy was at an end."

Several years before the war, the noted phrenologist, Dr. Orson G. Fowler, of New York, visited Memphis and, as usual on his tours, delivered a free lecture in a public hall. Near the close of this he called upon the audience to choose persons present to be examined phrenologically. There was a loud call for "Forrest," and presently a tall, but muscular, well-dressed, farmer-looking man stepped briskly down the aisle and up on the rostrum.

Dr. Fowler looked at him with admiration for a moment, ran his hands lightly over his head, and said very impressively: "Here is a man who would have been a Cæsar, a Hannibal, or Napoleon if he had had the opportunity. He has all the qualities of a great military genius. If he could not go over the Alps he would go through them;" and proceeded in this strain at some length, predicting that if Mr. Forrest ever had the opportunity he would yet distinguish himself in some way. The planter retired amid tumultuous applause, little dreaming that in less than seven years he would be a lieutenant-general with world-wide and enduring fame.

We have now followed Nathan B. Forrest in a fairly consecutive order of events from his birth in a plain log cabin to the culmination of his vocations in 1860–'61 as a business man and planter in north Mississippi and Memphis. He had passed through varied and trying experiences, and had reached a point where he might reasonably expect to rest upon his well-earned competency. Having led an active and strictly temperate life, he was in the full en-

joyment of perfect health and physical vigor. Six feet two inches high, weighing one hundred and eighty-five pounds, straight as an Indian, of perfect, symmetrical frame, confident of his own strength and resources, he was the beau ideal of a volunteer soldier.*

* The Forrest family Bible with many private papers was burned, with General Forrest's temporary residence on President's Island, near Memphis, about a month before his death in the autumn of 1877. The loss was irreparable, and accounts largely for the absence of exact dates as to births, marriages, and deaths, in the foregoing chapter.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST CAMPAIGN IN KENTUCKY.

On the 14th of June, 1861, Nathan Bedford Forrest, the wealthy Southern planter, then in his fortieth year, enlisted at Memphis as a private in Captain Josiah S. White's company of troopers and took his place in the ranks. This became " Company D " in the Sixth Tennessee battalion, stationed for a time at Randolph on the river, above Memphis, and afterward belonged to the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry surrendered under Lieutenant-General Forrest at Gainesville, Ala., in May, 1865. Forrest had been a State's-right Democrat, but was opposed to a dissolution of the Union so long as there was any hope of peace between the sections; but after President Lincoln's proclamation of April 15, 1861, he saw the storm coming, and at once decided to cast his lot with the South. About the 10th of July Private Forrest received a despatch from Governor Isham G. Harris calling him to Memphis, where he was given authority to raise a regiment for the provisional Government of the Confederacy, then established at Montgomery, Ala. Forrest immediately inserted a notice in the Appeal, calling for five hundred able-bodied men to report to him at the Gayoso Hotel, to constitute a battalion of mounted rangers. All who could were to furnish horses and arms—shotguns and pistols preferred, the men to be credited with such property when mustered into service. Knowing that neither the State nor Confederate Government could

arm and equip his command efficiently, he made a trip to Kentucky, visiting Paris, Lexington, Mount Sterling, and Frankfort to look for recruits and arms. Not finding many recruits at once, he ventured to Louisville about the 20th of July, and there with his own means bought five hundred Colt's revolvers, one hundred saddles, and other equipments. These were loaded into wagons at night by six young volunteers —not over eighteen years old—and started on the road south. Thence going to Bradenburg, Meade County, Ky., Colonel Forrest mustered in a company of ninety men—the Boone Rangers, under Captain Frank Overton—which became the first company of the regiment ultimately formed. The men left in small parties, and rendezvoused near Nolin Station on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Forrest followed with his wagons, overtook the men there, and they all proceeded safely through the country to Memphis. Meantime Captain Charles May had organized a company called the Forrest Rangers. These two formed the nucleus of the battalion which was organized with eight companies about the 1st of October, 1861. They were as follows: Company A, Captain Overton, Bradenburg, Ky. (ninety strong); Company B, Captain Bocat, southern Alabama (eighty strong); Company C, Captain May, Memphis (ninety strong); Company D, Captain Gould, Texas (ninety strong); Company E, Captain Trewhart, Gadsden, Ala. (eighty strong); Company F, Captain Kelley, Huntsville, Ala. (ninety strong); Company G, Captain Logan, Harrodsburg, Ky. (about forty-five strong); Company H, Captain Milner, Marshall County, Ala. (eighty-five strong); altogether about six hundred and fifty strong. In the second week of October an election of field officers was held. Nathan B. Forrest was chosen lieutenant-colonel without opposition, and Captain D. C. Kelley became

major; Lieutenant C. A. Schuyler was appointed adjutant, with J. P. Strange, a young merchant of Memphis, as his sergeant-major. Soon after the organization Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest was ordered to march to Fort Donelson, at Dover, Middle Tennessee, and the entire battalion reached there in the latter part of October. The command was indifferently armed, half the men having only shotguns. Fort Donelson, then an unimportant place comparatively, was commanded by Colonel A. Heiman, of the Tenth Tennessee Infantry, with about five hundred men. Forrest was ordered to look out for gunboats coming up Cumberland River. Proceeding as far as Canton, Ky., he was ordered by General Lloyd Tilghman to report to his headquarters at Hopkinsville, Ky.; thence he was ordered about the middle of November to the Ohio River to report movements between the Cumberland and Green rivers. Reaching Princeton, Major Kelley with a detachment made a detour and captured a steam transport on the Ohio River loaded with sugar, coffee, blankets, and other desirable supplies. Just as he returned with the booty word came that the gunboat Conestogo had gone up the Cumberland River to seize some clothing stored at Canton for the Confederates. Forrest set out with the whole battalion, and riding all night made the distance of thirty-two miles in eight hours, reaching the place next morning. A four-pounder piece of artillery was brought along from Princeton. The gunboat soon came in sight, and after reconnoitering shelled the woods to feel for an enemy. Lieutenant Sullivan responded with his little four-pounder, but was compelled to retire to a safer position. The commander of the Conestogo kept up the firing for several hours, but, concluding it might not be safe to land, closed the port-holes and steamed back down the river. This was the first experience of Forrest and

his men under fire from a gunboat. They were in concealment, and fired at the port-holes of the gunboat, but with what effect was not then known. No casualties were reported in the battalion. Returning to Hopkinsville on the 21st of November, the command was reenforced by two companies of cavalry from Alabama—one the McDonald Dragoons, under Captain Charles McDonald, and the other under Captain D. C. Davis, from Huntsville, Ala.—these making ten companies in all.

In the latter part of November Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest, in accordance with his own ideas and request, was ordered by Brigadier-General Charles Clark to make a reconnaissance in force in the direction of Calhoun on the north bank of the Green River, Kentucky, where General Thomas L. Crittenden was reported to be at the head of a large Union force of infantry and cavalry. He advanced to Greenville, where he captured some ammunition and equipments; thence to Caseyville, on the Ohio River, and on toward the village of Marion, Crittenden County. Near that place he narrowly escaped a bullet intended for him which killed the surgeon of his regiment, Dr. Van Wick. Forrest took charge of a detachment, intending to arrest one Jonathan Bells, a Unionist charged with having caused the imprisonment of a prominent Southern sympathizer. Approaching the house of Mr. Bells, Dr. Van Wick, riding beside Forrest, was shot dead by some one within who escaped by the back door. Had Colonel Forrest worn as showy a uniform as his surgeon he doubtless would have ended his career there in the wilds of western Kentucky. A detachment sent after the murderer of Dr. Van Wick met ten Baptist ministers, noted for their Union sentiments, who had just returned from a meeting of a church association in Illinois, and they were brought before Colonel Forrest.

Memphis Sept 29 1861

Dr J. H. P. Westbrook

Sir I have just Recd a letter from John Harrold in reply to a message I sent you I am Glad that you have concluded to accept my offer of Sergant of my regament I no of no Man that I would prefer to your self your duties will consist ~~[illegible]~~ of nothing but the attention ~~[illegible]~~ the regiment while on the field and attend the sick in camp I want you to come up next week and see me and we will talk the Matter over I think I will be able to leave with my command in 10 days I leave this Evening for Columbus Ky will return on Monday or Tuesday next

Yours Most Respect

N. B. Forrest

He held eight of them as hostages and sent the other two to Illinois to recover some Kentuckians of alleged Southern sympathies who had been captured by a raiding party from that side. The emissaries were successful, and all the preachers were soon discharged to go to their homes. This expedition returned to Hopkinsville after an absence of some three weeks, and brought in quite a supply of hogs, horses, and various articles for the use of the army. There was a considerable Federal force in pursuit, but no action resulted. On December 28th a company of forty Tennesseeans under command of Captain Starnes and Lieutenant McLemore overtook and joined Forrest. This was at Greenville. The roads were very heavy with mud and ice, and movements were made with difficulty. The advance, some two hundred strong, was moved out eight miles, and there the report came by a scout that a Federal force of about five hundred had crossed the road a few miles distant, and was moving in the direction of Sacramento, a small place. The news inspired the command to ride up briskly, although the men and horses were already tired. During this movement, rapid as it could be made, a well-mounted Kentucky girl rode up by the side of Colonel Forrest and cheered him and his men on to the charge. Her head was uncovered, her tresses flying in the air, and her face aflame with enthusiasm. The colonel—always a ladies' man—in a modest way alluded to the incident in his official report. This sentimental Joan of Arc was politely asked to retire before the real fighting began.

Pushing on rapidly, the Confederates overtook the Federal rear-guard within a mile of Sacramento. The Union cavalry seemed in doubt as to whether the pursuers were friends or foes. Forrest seized a Maynard rifle from one of his men and fired the opening shot, which settled that matter. He had by this time gath-

ered about one hundred and fifty of his men who had straggled after a ride of thirty miles that day, and pushed forward only to fire and fall back. The Federals followed, and as the other Confederates arrived Forrest ordered flank movements by Major Kelley and Captain Starnes. Meantime he had dismounted some of his troopers and engaged the enemy directly in front. This was his first opportunity to adopt the tactics which he afterward employed with such success. As Starnes and Kelley swung in on the right and left Forrest led a charge in the center. The Union forces fled and were hotly pursued—shooting and shouting as they went, and all poured pell-mell through Sacramento. Captain Merriwether, a Kentucky Confederate, was shot dead with a pistol-ball through his brain. Colonel Forrest with his saber struck down and mortally wounded the Federal Captain Bacon; Private W. H. Terry, by Forrest's side, received a fatal saber-wound at the hands of the Federal Captain Davis. Forrest, running at full speed, collided with the captain, and both went down together. Davis was severely injured, and at once surrendered. Forrest was bruised, but not seriously hurt. During the conflict he struck down three of his opponents; of the gallant few who turned to fight none escaped. It was a short, thrilling conflict. The pursuit was continued some three miles. The Confederates reported two killed and three privates wounded. Major Murray, commanding the Federal detachment, reported one officer—Captain Bacon—and eight soldiers killed, and forty missing out of the one hundred and sixty-eight men of Jackson's regiment in the engagement. The Federals also lost Captain A. N. Davis, captured, and Lieutenant John L. Walters, missing.* Forrest

* Rebellion Records, vol. vii, p. 63.

had perhaps two hundred men in the fight, with about one hundred coming up from the rear—men who had straggled in after a long, hard ride. Of this early sanguinary conflict on the border-line, General Thomas L. Crittenden, of the Union army, reported to General Don Carlos Buell as follows:

CALHOUN, KY., *December* 30, 1861.

In the fight beyond Sacramento we lost eight killed and eight, perhaps thirteen, captured. Over four hundred rebel cavalry surprised one hundred and sixty-eight of Jackson's cavalry as they were returning from a scout to South Carrollton. Major Murray and other officers behaved with great gallantry, supported by about forty-five men. The charge was repelled and the men resisted the whole body of the enemy for ten minutes, when some dastard shouted, "Retreat to Sacramento!" Most of the men fled, of course, and did not stop at Sacramento. Captain Albert G. Bacon was killed and seven privates. The rebels took away three wagon-loads of dead and wounded. Although outnumbered and partially surprised, I think my men had the best of the fight. I rode out to Sacramento yesterday and found Jackson burying the dead—six of our men. Five or six of our men were so badly wounded that we could not bring them in.

On January 3, 1862, General Crittenden reported: "As it was, the casualties of the enemy were equal to ours. We had, however, to mourn the loss of eight gallant soldiers and three officers of uncommon bravery and soldierly qualities: Captain A. G. Bacon, killed, Captain A. N. Davis, captured, and Lieutenant John L. Walters, missing."

Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest, in his report from Hopkinsville, December 30, 1861, states in substance that: "Under orders to reconnoiter to the front, I moved from camp on Thursday, the 26th, with detachments from Companies A, C, and D, First-Lieutenant

Crutcher and Captains May and Gould; detachment of twenty-five men of Captain Merriwether's company under his command. Major Kelley, with detachments from Companies E, F, and G under Lieutenants Hampton and Cowan, had been ordered to Grenada to await orders. Saturday, 27th, at Greenville, formed a junction with a detachment of forty cavalry from Russellville under command of Captain Starnes and Lieutenant McLemore, who with Major Kelley were awaiting my arrival. The command—about three hundred strong—moved forward in one column. We had advanced about eight miles down the Rumsey Road when we learned that the enemy—five hundred strong—had that morning crossed from Calhoun to Rumsey. As the news ran down the column it was impossible to repress jubilant and defiant shouts, which reached the height of enthusiasm as the women from the houses waved us forward. A beautiful young lady, on horseback, smiling, with unbound tresses in the breeze, met the column just before our advance-guard came up with the rear of the enemy, infusing nerve into my arm and knightly chivalry within my heart. One mile this side of Sacramento we came up with the rear-guard of the enemy, who halted. Taking a Maynard rifle I fired on them, and they rode off rapidly to a column which formed just over the brow of a hill. The head of my column arriving, I ordered it forward, but after skirmishing ordered it back, dismounting a number of men for sharpshooters, and ordering left- and right-flank movements by Kelley and Starnes. The rest of my men coming up, we charged in the center with a shout all along the line. The enemy broke in confusion. Some officers made a stand, but soon followed their men at full speed. The best mounted of my men overtook them and applied the saber freely at Sacramento, and

continued the chase two miles beyond. At this point Captain Bacon and Captain Burges were run through with saber thrusts, and Captain Davis, thrown from his horse, became my prisoner with a dislocated shoulder. The enemy, without officers, threw down their arms, and depended alone upon the speed of their animals. My horses were run down, and I deemed it best to call off the chase, having many wounded men clinging to their saddles to prevent themselves falling to the ground. Returning, we found many dead and wounded. Captains Bacon and Burges were made as comfortable as possible at the nearest farm-houses. There were killed on the field and mortally wounded, who have since died, about sixty-five; wounded and taken prisoners, about thirty-five. Among the killed were two captains and three lieutenants and several non-commissioned officers. . . . Our loss was Captain Merriwether and Private Terry killed, and three privates slightly wounded." Various officers and men are complimented for their gallantry. The discrepancy as to losses on each side—so common in the war—is something for the intelligent reader to decide upon for himself.

The following order indicates another change of commanders at Hopkinsville:

HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT,
BOWLING GREEN, KY., *November* 15, 1861.

Brigadier-General CLARK:

GENERAL: I am instructed by General Johnston to say you will proceed to Hopkinsville in obedience to orders you have received. Six companies of cavalry under Colonel Forrest have been ordered to that point. General Pillow will not take charge of the operations projected at that point. You will receive no troops from General Polk. . . . *

W. W. MACKALL, *A. A.-G.*

* Rebellion Records, vol. iv, p. 551.

Forrest made the following report:

HOPKINSVILLE, KY., *November* 14, 1861.

W. W. MACKALL, *Assistant Adjutant-General:*

I have been operating with my command of eight companies near Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, by order of General Polk. Finding the country impracticable for cavalry and with scant subsistence, I moved part of my command to Canton, north side of Cumberland River, leaving two companies at Dover. I am of no use south of Cumberland; desire my command united and can do vast service with General Tilghman. Will he so order?

N. B. FORREST, *Commanding Tenn. Cavalry.*

The following order throws some light upon the plan of Confederate operations:

HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT,
BOWLING GREEN, KY., *November* 1, 1861.

Brigadier-General TILGHMAN'S *Cavalry, Hopkinsville:*

General Johnston directs you to draw back your command to Clarksville. . . . .Send your sick and baggage to the rear first. At Clarksville employ your men in making defensive works planned by Major Gilmer. Maury's battery of artillery has been ordered to Clarksville. It is understood that a regiment of cavalry [Forrest's] is on the north side of the Cumberland and below. . . . If so, apprise the colonel of your new position, that he may not be attacked unawares. Colonel Gregg's regiment of Texas troops ought to reach Clarksville to-day. The value of the railway from this place to Clarksville must not be lost sight of in the pressure of other business.

W. W. MACKALL, *A. A.-G.*

After the Sacramento affair Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest returned to Hopkinsville, where his men went into camp and were occupied with routine duties, drilling, grooming the horses, making themselves comfortable, and getting ready for further hard service.

Scouting parties were sent out from time to time, but nothing important occurred until about the 10th of January, 1862, when General Clark ordered the regiment, as it might now be called, to move forward on a reconnaissance in the direction of Calhoun. Forrest soon reported a Federal force, supposed to be ten thousand strong, on Green River, ready to move. He was ordered to return and burn the bridges on Pond River, a tributary of the Green, which he did. Federal forces were reported coming from Cairo up the Tennessee River and from Louisville. General Clark evacuated Hopkinsville about the 7th of February, and Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest covered the rear of this movement as far as Clarksville, where he was ordered to report with his command to Brigadier-General Pillow, and thence was ordered to Fort Donelson on the west bank of the Cumberland River.

The commander of Forrest's Cavalry now began to be heard of and to figure in the war. From this time on down to the surrender his name was closely connected with operations in Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and incidentally with events in adjoining States. His recognition came slowly and reluctantly even in the house of his friends, outside of those close to him, but it came surely. There were certain West Point and political elements in the South as well as in the North that were none too favorable to the rapid promotion of volunteers, and N. B. Forrest overcame those in his way only by supreme self-reliance, will-power, and genius for war. That he was a natural-born soldier and leader of men was demonstrated in every skirmish and battle in which he was engaged. The Federals found out what manner of man he was long before he was properly appreciated at Richmond.

CHAPTER III.

THE BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON.

THE battalion was in excellent shape and spirits and fairly well mounted, although not very well armed and equipped, when it reached the neighborhood of Fort Donelson on Sunday, the 9th of February, 1862, and was ferried across Cumberland River the next day. On Tuesday (11th) the men went into camp in the rear of the entrenchments, and while the horses were yet feeding on the first forage drawn, an order came from General Pillow to move out on the road toward Fort Henry, about ten miles distant on the Tennessee River. This supposed Confederate stronghold, though gallantly defended, had fallen into the hands of the Federals on the 6th of February after a fierce bombardment. General Tilghman and about ninety men were captured, and the rest of the garrison escaped across the country to Fort Donelson.

It may be remarked here, as something singular in the topography of the country, that the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, having their sources widely apart in the Allegheny and Cumberland mountains, converge closely together at the points known as Dover, or Donelson, on the north, and Fort Henry on the southward, and thence pursuing almost northwest and parallel directions, empty some fifty or sixty miles farther on into the Ohio River at Smithland and Paducah, Ky. Hence Commander Foote's flotilla could easily, after demolishing Fort Henry, run down

the Tennessee River and up the Ohio and Cumberland rivers in ample time to take part in the assault upon Fort Donelson.

Many changes and improvements had been made in the defenses of Fort Donelson since Colonel Forrest first reported there three or four months previously. Major J. F. Gilmer, a native of North Carolina, a West-Pointer, and an experienced military engineer, who afterward became chief engineer of the Confederate army, had laid out the works of the place and superintended their erection. His idea seems to have been more to obstruct the river and prevent gunboats from going up to Nashville than to resist a strong land force. Everything possible with the limited means and supply of tools at hand had been done for the defense of the place, including the mounting of heavy guns in the water batteries. This formidable armament embraced a 10-inch columbiad of a hundred and twenty-eight pounds, a rifled 32-pounder (64-pound bolt), eight 32-pounders, and two 32-pound carronades.

Brigadier-General Bushrod R. Johnson, an officer of military education and experience, reached the place and assumed command on the 7th of February; and Brigadier-General Gideon J. Pillow, who had been a major-general in the Mexican War, appeared upon the ground on the 9th, to succeed General Lloyd Tilghman, captured at Fort Henry, and went to work with great energy. Reenforcements poured in, and with them came Brigadier-General S. B. Buckner, regarded as an accomplished officer, with a division of new troops; and on the 13th General Floyd, of Virginia, the senior in rank, arrived with two small brigades from Bowling Green. The entire Confederate force hastily concentrated there was estimated at something over fourteen thousand, rank and file, although General Grant in his Memoirs claims that there were

twenty-one thousand men within the Confederate lines. This, however, may be an open question, and is not of real consequence in a work of biography.

Tuesday morning Forrest advanced on the west toward Fort Henry only about three miles when he encountered a detachment of Federal cavalry which he attacked with his usual vigor, forcing the Union troopers back upon a heavy column of infantry and then withdrawing. The next morning (Wednesday, 12th) he advanced with his own command of ten companies, three companies of Kentucky cavalry, and Lieutenant-Colonel Gantt's battalion of Tennesseeans—a force of about thirteen hundred men, over which he had command as acting brigadier-general. The Kentucky companies were commanded respectively by Captains J. K. Huey, Wilcox, and Williams. This was the entire strength of the Confederate cavalry at Fort Donelson, and some of that was without experience, training, or strict discipline. A sharp engagement soon followed, and lasted several hours. Forrest dismounted a part of his men, fighting them as infantry, and from an advantageous position on a ridge checked the advance in front of him. The Federals made a skilfully conceived flank movement, but were met and repulsed by Major David C. Kelley. The Union infantry support then came forward in force, and Forrest fell back, skirmishing as he went until within the entrenchments of Dover, which were menaced at dusk by the advance of Grant's army.

Skirmishing was resumed on the morning of Thursday (13th), the Federals moving up like regulars, and the Confederates acting mainly on the defensive within breastworks. Forrest, however, was on the outside most of the day, making observations and taking an active part. He was on the skirmish line, and depended more upon his own eyes than upon field-

glasses. Once during the day he seized a gun and brought down one of Birge's Federal sharpshooters who was making himself very troublesome from a tree several hundred yards distant. The Federals made charge after charge with reckless gallantry, but for the time being were repulsed with heavy losses. There was no decisive result. That night the weather, which had been quite pleasant, suddenly turned cold with gusts of sleet and snow, which continued for two or three days, and was especially severe upon the illy clad Southern troops.

On Friday afternoon, the 14th, Flag-Officer Foote, of the Federal navy, made a grand assault upon the water batteries and the outer works of Fort Donelson facing the river. His flotilla consisted of three iron-clads, each of thirteen guns of the heaviest caliber, and two wooden but well-armed vessels, nine guns each, in the rear. Some of the guns were rifled 100-pounders, and there were lighter pieces in the bows and stern. After Foote's effective work at Fort Henry he could reasonably expect to speedily reduce Fort Donelson. The bombardment that afternoon was a magnificent affair; only one of the heavy Confederate guns (commanded by Lieutenant Hugh L. Bedford) was able to respond, as its mate was accidentally spiked. The others were worked effectively at short range, and the flotilla was repulsed and drifted away in a crippled condition, not to appear upon the scene again.

Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest, with his major, D. C. Kelley, better known as "the fighting preacher," rode up from the flanks and witnessed the spectacular duel which fairly shook the earth. Forrest became greatly excited, and Major Kelley told it of him afterward that he exclaimed: "Parson, for God's sake, pray! Nothing but God Almighty can save that fort!"

On Saturday morning, the 15th, bitterly cold, For-

rest set his troops in motion at four o'clock and led the advance of Pillow's command on the left. Skirmishing began early; by six o'clock the battle opened in earnest and raged for two hours, the Confederates seemingly having the best of it. Without waiting for orders or reenforcements Forrest made a flank movement, charged a battery, and captured six pieces of artillery, four brass and two 24-pounder iron pieces, and lost a number of men. Here his horse was shot, and his brother, Lieutenant Jeffrey Forrest, had his horse killed under him and was badly hurt by the fall. After this he moved his regiment from the left toward Buckner's position in the center, and from there, supported by the Second Kentucky Infantry, charged upon two guns with strong infantry support on the flanks and in the rear. The cavalry and infantry went in together under a terrific fire; the losses were heavy on both sides. Forrest and his men got to the guns first, but the Kentuckians were at their heels, and after a close hand-to-hand fight the guns were taken and the gunners killed or carried away with the Federal infantry.

Here Captain Charles May, of the Forrest Rangers, who had asked to be allowed to lead the charge, was killed. Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest's horse—repeatedly wounded—received a fatal shot and fell dead under his rider. Another was quickly secured by Forrest, who rode forward with one or two of his men to reconnoiter, and suddenly came in view of a battery and strong force of infantry, and, as he turned to dash away, this battery opened fire and a shell plowed through his horse's body just under the saddle-skirt, and the cavalry leader was once more left on foot. He ran to the rear, joined his command, and reported to General Pillow, who had ordered Buckner and other infantry to fall back within the works. This was about

two o'clock Saturday afternoon. Forrest was ordered to remain upon the field and gather up the wounded, the guns, and other military supplies to be found, and was so occupied until about six o'clock. Several thousand stands of small arms were thus secured and sent inside the entrenchments, as well as the six guns of the captured battery. But as most of these were included in the surrender of the fort next day, they were of little or no service to the Southerners.

The Federals had undoubtedly suffered very heavily, and the Confederates, while losing also, felt that they had won a victory to be followed up next day, little dreaming of surrender or retreat. It was during and near the close of this bloody fight that Captain Porter, an old United States naval officer whose battery had been severely cut up, and who was himself wounded by a shot through the thigh, on being carried away, cried out to a stripling of a lieutenant, "Morton, don't let them have the guns!" Forrest heard Porter's exclamation, and afterward found young Morton and made him his chief of artillery, in which position he greatly distinguished himself.

A little after midnight, or early in the morning of the 16th of February (Sunday), Lieutenant-Colonel Forrest was summoned to headquarters, where, to his surprise, he found Generals Floyd, Pillow, and Buckner, with some other officers, holding a council of war and discussing a surrender to General Grant. Nothing could have startled or aroused him more. It was argued that the Federals had received heavy reenforcements, and that the Confederates were short of ammunition, hungry, tired out, half-frozen, and unequal to further resistance. Generals Floyd and Buckner were ready to give up; Pillow was in favor of continuing the fight. "That was what they came there for," he said. Forrest declared that the army

was not penned up, surrounded, or whipped, and stalking out to his camp he selected two reliable men —Adam Johnson, afterward a Confederate general officer, and B. H. Martin, who became lieutenant-colonel of a Kentucky regiment—and securing a trusty citizen as a guide he sent them to investigate the situation. They returned in an hour and reported that the way was open for retreat; that the water to be forded was only up to the flanks of their horses, and that they saw no enemy, and only some old camp-fires fanned into a blaze by the high winds or kindled by wounded men. Forrest returned and begged for a retreat of the army if it was necessary, even offering to furnish the rear-guard. Ammunition was expected by boat from Clarksville any hour, and did come at daylight, and as to rations, although perhaps not well distributed, General Grant afterward reported that he captured enough rice to supply his army for twenty days.

It was decided, however, to surrender. Forrest announced that they could not surrender his regiment, and was told that he could go if he started before a flag of truce was sent. Returning to camp, he aroused his men and told them he was going out if he died in the attempt. They mounted their horses and followed him out, all except one company, which was somehow left, without losing a man or seeing an enemy. Similar risks were successfully taken hundreds of times later on in the war by soldiers on both sides, but Forrest set the example and was a pioneer. General Pillow held the correct theory, and came away or rather got away ahead of Forrest. General Floyd took a steamboat and escaped up the river. Numbers of cavalry, besides Forrest's own men, as well as infantry, followed him, and reached Nashville or went to their homes to recuperate. One-half or two-thirds of the ten thousand or more men who were surrendered unconditionally by

General Buckner on the 16th of February could have been saved to fight under Albert Sidney Johnston at Shiloh. Still, the surrender was made in good faith, as it seemed inevitable. Instances are yet related of infantrymen who rode behind Forrest's men on their horses across the backwater of Lick Creek and thus escaped capture.

There has been much said and written, much crimination and recrimination, especially on the Southern side, as to the causes leading up to the surrender of Fort Donelson. The main reasons are found in the facts that General Grant's army, accompanied by a strong, though not entirely effective flotilla, outnumbered the Confederates about two to one, was far better armed, equipped, and clothed, and, being from the North, could better endure the rigors of unusually inclement weather, such as prevailed the last two days of the fight and investment. The Confederates offered a determined resistance, and perhaps made the best of their strength and resources, but they were under the impression that their ammunition was nearly exhausted, when, in fact, a boat-load reached Dover from Clarksville on the morning of the surrender. Then the idea prevailed that they could not get away, and yet Forrest and his men, and Generals Pillow and Floyd and parts of their commands escaped without seeing a single Federal soldier in the way. The part taken by Forrest, then only a lieutenant-colonel, is set forth with sufficient clearness in a report he made early in February, 1862, and is well worth producing. In substance it is as follows: "I arrived from Hopkinsville at Fort Donelson, Monday evening, February 10th, and finished crossing my command Tuesday morning (11th). On the afternoon of the same day I was ordered to reconnoiter in the direction of Fort Henry. Three miles from Fort Donelson I met the enemy's

cavalry, supposed to be six hundred strong, pressed them hard about six miles, captured one prisoner, and mortally wounded several others. The commanding general signified that night his desire that I should take charge of all the cavalry at the post. Next morning (12th) I went out with my own regiment, three Kentucky companies (Captains Williams, Wilcox, and Huey), and Lieutenant-Colonel Gantt's battalion of Tennessee cavalry. Five miles on the road to Fort Henry my advance met and engaged the advance of the enemy. After a skirmish they retreated, leaving several dead and wounded. The enemy halted, maneuvered, and began to move by parallel roads toward the fort. I changed my position from the right to the extreme left of my line of battle, throwing two squadrons of cavalry across the road, again attacking the enemy vigorously. My first squadron dismounted, as skirmishers were soon hotly engaged with greatly superior numbers. The second squadron was ordered to charge, and Major Kelley, commanding the left, now center of my line, advanced with three squadrons. The enemy gave back, wheeled out of his way, and the infantry arose and poured in a terrific volley at short range accompanied by a heavy fire of grape. I was now able to mount, and drew off in good order my skirmishers, and, finding the enemy in front in large force with none to support me in reach, I ordered my cavalry to fall back, and was soon ordered back within our entrenchments. This skirmish was from about 9 A. M. to 2 P. M. We killed during the day about one hundred men and wounded several hundred more. The enemy advanced no more that day, but planted a few cannon and opened fire at long range. General Floyd reached the fort in the afternoon, and the whole army was engaged in throwing up entrenchments during the night on the hills surrounding Dover.

"The enemy opened a heavy cannonade from batteries and ten gunboats early on Thursday morning. Soon after our entrenchments were attacked at all points, and there was scarcely a cessation of small arms and artillery for six hours. The musketry ceased about 1 P. M., and the cannonading continued until after dark. The gunboats drew off early, supposed to be crippled, but returned occasionally. The cavalry was but little engaged, acting only as pickets and couriers. On Friday I was ordered out with the infantry on the left, and after some sharpshooting between the cavalry and the enemy was ordered back into the entrenchments. I was next called on for sharpshooters to dislodge the enemy who were from heights and trees annoying our infantry. This we accomplished in about two hours, returning to my command about the time the gunboat attack was made on the fort. Of this attack I was an eye-witness, and have never seen a description which did anything like justice to the attack or defense. More determination could not have been exhibited by the attacking party, while more coolness and bravery was never manifested than was seen in our artillerists. Never was there greater anxiety depicted on the faces of brave men than during the terrific roar of cannon, returned ever and anon by the slow but regular report of our one single 10-inch gun. Never were men more jubilant than when the victory crowned the steady bravery of our little fort; old men wept, shout after shout went up as the gunboats were driven back. The army was in the best possible spirits, feeling that relieved of their greatest terror they could whip any land force that could be brought against them. During the night I was called into council with the generals commanding, when it was determined to bring on the attack the next morning by again passing our entrenchments and attacking the enemy's right.

"Early the next morning (Saturday) I moved out on the left and engaged with the sharpshooters until our infantry could form. General B. R. Johnson, commanding the left, moved to the front, and after an obstinate fight the enemy retreated. Finding his flank exposed across an open field to front and left, I led my cavalry forward, but found the ground a marsh, and we were unable to pass it. The enemy formed on the edge of a second field to our front and right, but by maneuvering we doubtless prevented their attempting to flank our infantry. Finding that our infantry would cut them off they retreated with their cavalry, which we could see in the distance, but not participating during the day or night. Our infantry had now driven them about a mile, they doggedly disputing the whole ground, leaving dead and wounded scattered through the woods and fields up in the ravine. The enemy, leaving their third position for the first time, retreated in haste. Advancing by a road through a ravine, I here passed our line of infantry with my command in moving to the center. I charged the enemy's battery of six guns which had kept several of our regiments in check for several hours, killing and slaughtering a great many of our men and horses. I captured the battery, killing most of the men, then immediately moved on the flank of the enemy obstinately maintaining their position. They finally gave way, our infantry and cavalry both charging them, at the same time committing great slaughter. Moving still farther to the right, I found a regiment of our cavalry in confusion, which I relieved by charging the enemy to their front. Here sixty-four of the enemy were found in forty yards square. General Pillow coming up ordered me to charge the enemy in a ravine. I charged by squadrons, filing the first company of each squadron to the right and the second to the left, and, on reaching the

ravine, firing and falling into the rear of the third squadron until the squadrons had charged. We here completely routed the enemy, accomplishing what three different regiments had failed to do. Seeing the enemy's battery to our right about to turn on us, I now ordered a charge of this battery, from which we drove the enemy, capturing two guns. Following down the ravine we captured the third gun, which they were endeavoring to carry off, gunners and drivers retreating up the hill. In the charge we killed about fifty sharpshooters who were supporting the guns. I ordered forward scouts, who, returning, informed me that the enemy with three guns and three regiments of infantry were moving up the road from Fort Henry. We had driven the enemy back without a reverse, from the left of our entrenchments to the center, having opened three different roads by which we might have retreated if the generals had not, as was deemed best in the council of the night before, ordered the retreat of the army. The fight here ended about 2.30 P. M. without any change in our relative positions. We were employed the remainder of the evening in gathering up arms and getting off the wounded. I was three times over the battle-field, and late in the evening was two miles up the river on the road to the Forge. There was none of the enemy in sight when dark came on.

" Saturday night our troops slept flushed with victory, and confident they could drive the enemy back to the Tennessee River the next morning. About twelve o'clock at night I was called in council with the generals who had under discussion the surrender of the fort. They reported that the enemy had received eleven thousand reenforcements since the fight, and presumably had returned to the positions occupied the previous day. Returning to my quarters I sent out

two men, who, going by a road up the bank of the river, returned without seeing any of the enemy, and only fires, which I supposed to be the old camp-fires fanned by the high winds into a blaze, and so stated to the generals upon my return. General Buckner declared he could not hold his position; Generals Floyd and Pillow gave up the responsibility of the command to him, and I told them I neither could nor would surrender my command. General Pillow then said I could cut my way out if I chose to do so, and he and General Floyd agreed to come out with me. I got my command ready and reported at headquarters. General Floyd informed me that General Pillow had left, and that he would go by boat. I moved about a mile out on the road we had gone the morning before, crossed a deep slough from the river, saddle-skirt deep, and filed into the road to Cumberland Iron-works. I ordered Major Kelley and Adjutant Schuyler to remain with one company at the point where we entered this road, where the enemy's cavalry would attack if they attempted to follow. They remained until day was dawning. Over five hundred cavalry had passed, a company of artillery horses had followed, and a number of men from different regiments passing over hard, frozen ground. More than two hours had been occupied in passing. Not a gun had been fired at us. Not an enemy had been seen or heard.

"The enemy could not have reinvested their former positions without traveling a considerable distance and carrying away the dead and dying, as there had been great slaughter upon that portion of the field. And I am clearly of the opinion that two-thirds of our army could have marched out without loss, and that had we continued the fight the next day we should have gained a glorious victory, as our troops were in fine spirits, believing we had whipped, and the roads through

which we came were open as late as eight o'clock Sunday morning, as many of my men who came out afterward reported. I made a slow march with my exhausted horses to Nashville, where we arrived on Tuesday morning, the 18th, and reported myself to General Floyd, who placed me in command of the city on Thursday, the 20th, at the time of his leaving. I remained in the city until Sunday evening, the 23d, during which time I was busily engaged with my regiment in restoring order to the city and removing public property. My loss in the battle in killed, wounded, and taken prisoners was between three and four hundred men. Among the number was Captain May, who fell at the head of his company while leading a charge. My regiment charged two batteries, taking nine pieces of artillery, which, with nearly four thousand stands of arms, I had taken inside of our lines." *

The foregoing is almost a verbatim copy of the report signed by Lieutenant-Colonel N. B. Forrest. It is reproduced in order to give an idea of the man who thus early showed such capacity in the art of war, and was to make greater reputation upon other fields. It is apparent that he had a will-power and executive ability peculiar to himself. Such a man at the head of Northern cavalry, composed always of stalwart, fearless men, and supplied with the best arms, equipments, and horses that money could buy, would have cut his way through from the Ohio to the Gulf and from the Potomac to the Mississippi in less than a year. In a supplemental report made as late as November 7, 1862, at Murfreesboro, Forrest, then a brigadier-general of cavalry, made some explanatory statements as to the result of the conference of general officers held at Fort Donelson on the night of February 15th. He

* Rebellion Records, vol. vii, p. 385.

says: "On that day and the day before, a large, fresh force said to be twenty thousand strong had reached the landing below us. At that time we were invested by a force estimated at thirty thousand. All the officers present felt the necessity of cutting our way out and resuming communications with General Johnston. It was therefore resolved to give them battle next morning. I understood it to be the ultimate intention to retire from the place if we succeeded in opening our way, but nothing was said about our retreating from the field. No order was given to that effect, and no proposition was offered for that purpose; no suggestion was made of a character to indicate such an intention, and no such determination arrived at.

"On the day of the fight, the 15th, no artillery was taken from our entrenchments except one piece late in the evening; no rations were prepared or taken in the field; blankets and knapsacks were left behind; no order for retreat was prescribed; no quartermaster, commissary, or ordnance horses were prepared to accompany a retreat, and if a retreat had been attempted from the field of fight it could not have been accomplished. The commands were scattered and mixed in fragments; very many of the men after the middle of the day had gone back into the town, and were around the fires and up and down the river bank. I had again and again during the day sent portions of my command into the entrenchments, and had ammunition brought out on horseback. The day itself was mainly occupied in the active operations of the fight. Soon after the field fight was terminated, fighting was begun on our right in General Buckner's rifle-pits, which was continued until sundown. In my opinion the pursuit of the enemy could not have been continued longer without coming in contact with a large fresh force, which in the scattered and exhausted condition of our

troops we could not have withstood. The character of the country over which we would have had to retreat from Donelson to Charlotte was excessively poor and broken, and at that time covered with snow and sleet, and could not have furnished a half-day's rations for our force."

The above was probably intended to mollify public and official criticism as to some of the generals who agreed to the surrender in an hour when many of the troops felt that victory was assured. It may be here remarked that Colonel Forrest and Generals Pillow and Floyd were regarded in certain high quarters as guilty of little less than insubordination in getting away from Donelson as they did. General Pillow had been a major-general in the Mexican War, though not a West-Pointer, and fell under the displeasure of certain men who never forgave him for having attained such a rank, for making one of the most gallant fights of the war at Fort Donelson, and for making his escape. Therefore, he was never afterward given an important command unless temporarily—as at the battle of Murfreesboro, where he commanded a brigade. General Floyd for personal and political reasons fared about as badly, and was soon relegated out of sight.

There had to be scapegoats to go out into the wilderness and carry the odium of the great misfortune and humiliation of the fall of Fort Donelson, but Forrest was not a man to be loaded down that way. He cared nothing for petty cabals, jealousies, and mess-room talk, but would set out before breakfast and win a victory while others were drawing maps, or waiting to get a newspaper through the lines or to hear from a laggard scout. There were doubtless exaggerated reports among the Confederates as to General Grant's army, still it outnumbered the effective forces under General Floyd by at least two to one, and was large

enough and strong enough to have taken Fort Donelson ultimately in a fair, open fight. Reenforcements had come and were coming, but not in such numbers as General Forrest mentions in his supplemental report. It is not deemed necessary in writing the life of General Forrest to go into a minute account of all the engagements in which he took part, but rather to give general results and the parts he took as obtained from official and other reliable sources of information.

Thus it may be stated, to give an idea of the magnitude of the affair at Fort Donelson, that the forces engaged and the losses sustained on each side at the battle or series of battles there were nearly as follows: Federal force, in round numbers, twenty-seven thousand; losses: killed, five hundred; wounded, twenty-one hundred; total, twenty-six hundred. Confederate force, fourteen thousand eight hundred and five; killed, four hundred; wounded and sent away, eleven hundred and thirty-four; wounded and left, three hundred and fifty; total losses in battle, fourteen hundred and eighty-four. The disparity in losses is accounted for by the fact that the Union forces were all the time in the open field, while the Confederates chose their own ground, and fought part of the time from behind breastworks. The fall of the fort and the loss of over ten thousand prisoners, who otherwise might have taken part soon after at the battle of Shiloh, was a terrible disaster to the Confederate cause. Had Forrest been at the head of the army instead of commanding only a thousand or two effective cavalry, he would have led the greater part of it safely away in the direction of Nashville without any danger of immediate pursuit.

It seems to have been the impression of Forrest up to the night of the last councils of war that a fight would be made, and that, if not successful, the whole

force would be withdrawn. He had promised the parents of many young men to protect them, and was determined to do so. He declared in the council that he would rather their bones should bleach on the hillsides than have them go to the open prison pens of the North in midwinter; hence his determination to carry them away. All of his men who reported escaped. Lieutenant-Colonel Gantt failed, but said afterward that he was mistaken as to the place of rendezvous. Captain Overton's Kentucky cavalry went out, but by some means he was left and captured. General Floyd, chief in command, in abdicating obtained permission to move out his attenuated regiments, and did so. A good many men got out independently that night, and the next morning and afternoon. General Thomas Jordan, a gentleman of superior military education, a student of history and competent military critic, estimated in the Campaigns of Forrest that not more than ninety-five hundred officers and men were actually surrendered as prisoners of war, the rest having fallen or escaped.

On Tuesday, the 18th, Forrest reached Nashville about midday, established camps near the penitentiary, and reported in person to General A. S. Johnston, who was in the act of leaving for Murfreesboro and who directed him to report to General Floyd, who was left to ship stores and other public property south. The men were too tired to enter at once upon the guard and patrol duty assigned them, but most of them had their horses shod that afternoon and next day. Forrest did not report with his command at General Floyd's headquarters until the morning of Thursday, the 20th, and then found him preparing to leave for Murfreesboro, thirty miles southeast, on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. The general directed the lieutenant-colonel to send on his command south, but

to remain a day with a small detachment to look after the shipment of supplies. Major Kelley went on in command of the battalion. Forrest with forty men remained until Sunday morning, the 23d, when the head of Buell's column appeared at Edgefield on the opposite side of the Cumberland River.

The mayor and other citizens entered into arrangements for the surrender of the city to General Buell, which occurred on the 25th of February, and requested Forrest to retire. Having forwarded vast stores by both rail and wagons, as well as destroyed some five hundred barrels and tierces of wines and liquors, and much other property belonging to the Confederate Government, he rode off, covering the retreat of the trains of troops and refugees in the direction of Murfreesboro, and reported that night in person to General Johnston.

There was a disposition in the public mind of the South to hold some one responsible not only for the fall of Fort Donelson, but for the evacuation of Nashville and loss of stores which soon followed. The press was furious; the serious business of war was on; a special committee was appointed by the Confederate congress to ascertain who was to blame. Colonel Forrest was interrogated, and in reply stated as to Nashville: "I was not in the city at the time of its surrender, having left Fort Donelson on the morning of its surrender, and reached Nashville on Tuesday, February 18th, at about 10 A. M. I remained in the city up to Sunday evening—the 23d—following, but was there when the enemy came into Edgefield." Here follows a statement as to stores, a portion of which had been removed before the surrender. It seems that the citizens helped themselves with reckless freedom, and that a state of chaos, wild confusion, and anarchy prevailed. On the day after his arrival he attempted to

drive the mob of struggling soldiers and citizens of all classes from the doors of the departments. When every other means failed he charged the mob, got several wagons and had them loaded with stores for transportation. Large quantities were sent out by the two railroads leading south and by wagons, the latter going to Murfreesboro. Late in the week a bridge on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad gave way. The president of that road had previously (Sunday, the 16th) gone off on a special train, taking personal baggage, furniture, carriage, horses, etc.

In reply to an interrogation Colonel Forrest said: "It was eight days from the time the quartermaster, commissaries, and others connected with these departments left the city before the enemy appeared. With proper diligence on their part I have no doubt all the public stores might have been removed to places of safety. I did not meet or hear of Major Vernon K. Stevenson" (president of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad). "The city was in a much worse condition than I can convey an idea of on paper, and the loss of public stores must be estimated by millions of dollars. The panic was utterly useless, and not at all justified by the circumstances." Forrest said further that in his judgment if the quartermaster and commissary had remained at their post and worked diligently with the means at their command, the Government stores might all have been saved between the time of the fall of Fort Donelson and the arrival of the enemy at Nashville.

CHAPTER IV.

BATTLE OF SHILOH.—CAPTURE OF MURFREESBORO.

General Albert Sidney Johnston, recognizing the services and hardships of Colonel Forrest and his men, ordered him to march his battalion to Huntsville, Ala., and there give his soldiers a furlough until the 10th of March. This place was reached on Tuesday, February 25th, and the order was carried out. The men returned promptly at the time set, bringing new equipments, fresh horses, and recruits. At the same time Captain Jesse A. Forrest, the colonel's brother, reported with a new company. The command was ordered to Burnsville, Miss., on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, fifteen miles east of Corinth, and reached there on the 16th of March. Another company was added from Hardeman and Fayette counties under Captain C. A. Schuyler, the former adjutant, which made a full regiment, notwithstanding the fact that Captain Gould's company had been by some mischance left at Fort Donelson. A reorganization was effected whereby Lieutenant-Colonel N. B. Forrest became full colonel, Major D. C. Kelley lieutenant-colonel, Private Robert L. Balch was elected as major, and J. P. Strange, former sergeant-major, was appointed adjutant. The regiment remained quietly in camp for several days, but a scout of twenty men from McDonald's company was sent out, and soon reported that Buell was marching in force to effect a junction with Grant's army, which had come up the Tennessee

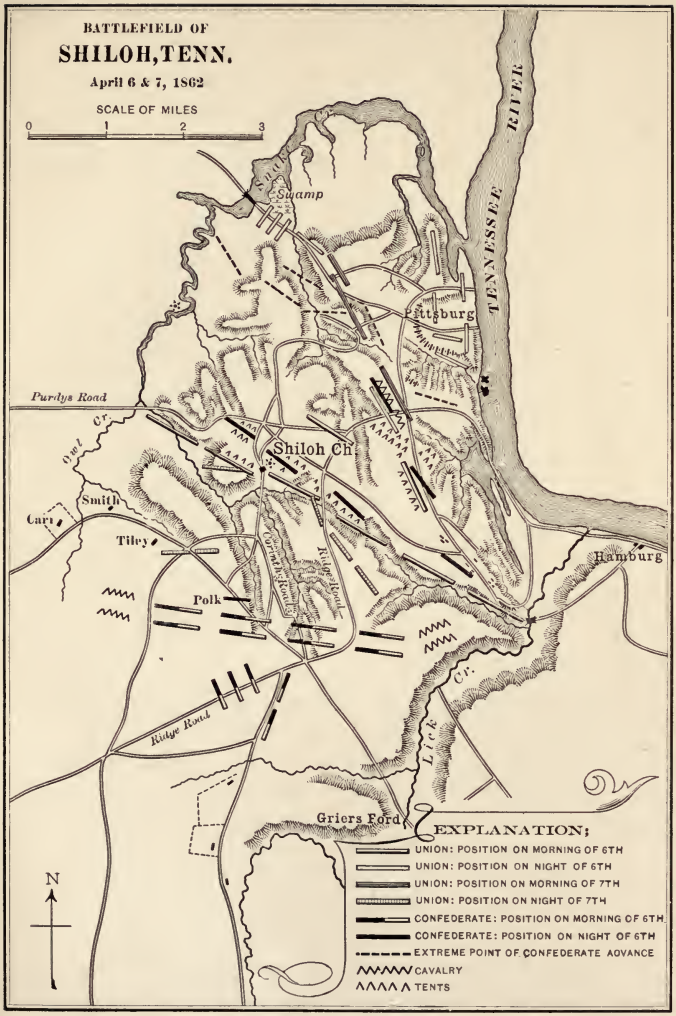
River. Forrest promptly reported this fact to General Johnston, who decided to strike a blow before the two armies could be united, and thus the movements were set in motion which culminated in the bloody battle of Shiloh. General Grant, with three divisions, including much of the force engaged at Fort Donelson, had established a strong line in front of Pittsburg Landing, and was followed by three others, commanded by Generals Sherman, Hurlbut, and Prentiss. General Buell's corps, five divisions strong, one of which diverged to Huntsville, was known to be marching through the country from Nashville.

Forrest's regiment, attached temporarily to Breckenridge's division, moved on the 2d of April, and marched to Monterey, and thence was ordered down the south side of Lick Creek. On Friday night, April 4th, the regiment was sent forward on picket duty; on Saturday, the 5th, skirmished sharply with the Federal outposts, and Colonel Forrest rode to General Johnston's headquarters to ask for instructions as to his position and duties. That night he slept with his troops on the ground, so close to the Federal lines that the bands could be distinctly heard. General Johnston had planned a surprise, and although some of the commands moved with painful slowness from Corinth, twenty-three miles from Pittsburg Landing, he had his lines in good position on Saturday evening, the 5th of April. Heavy firing began on the Confederate left early on the morning of the 6th. To many of the Federals this was a surprise, and they were steadily pushed back on the Tennessee River, some three miles distant, when the firing became general, and Forrest, not receiving any orders, threw his regiment back and across Lick Creek, and took a position on the right flank of the Confederate line.

Up to eleven o'clock he received no orders, and

resolved to go to the front and center, where the firing seemed heaviest. Here he found Cheatham's division had been repulsed, and proposed to join him in a charge across the field. Owing to the condition of his men the general declined; but Forrest took the responsibility alone, and advanced across a field under heavy fire, sustaining a loss of several men and horses. Continuing the charge, he pressed on through and over a part of a battery. The guns were taken possession of by the infantry which came up. Forrest fell back, and was soon ordered to that part of the field where Prentiss's Federal division was hard pressed, and, dashing through the infantry, was soon between this unfortunate but gallant division and the reserves near the river. The surrender of about two thousand men soon took place. Forrest kept on the right flank of the infantry, and pushed up toward the river until checked by a battery or series of batteries, fifty-two guns in all, which had made a last stand near Pittsburg Landing. Throwing out dismounted men as skirmishers, he sent word to General Polk that he believed if the infantry would press forward the Federals could be driven into the river. Some disjointed and desperate efforts were made by parts of Confederate commands to dislodge this formidable line of guns, but fresh troops from General Buell's advance began to arrive, the gunboats opened a heavy fire on the woods, and the struggle was reluctantly abandoned by those at the front.

About four or five o'clock Colonel Forrest was ordered to fall back with Chalmers's brigade and go into camp on the field. The calamity of the day to the Southern side was the death of General Albert Sidney Johnston, which occurred in the afternoon while he was leading a brigade at the right of the center and front. A rifle-ball struck him in the leg and after


BATTLEFIELD OF
SHILOH, TENN.
April 6 & 7, 1862
SCALE OF MILES
0 1 2 3
Swamp
TENNESSEE RIVER
Pittsburg
Purdys Road
Owl Cr.
Shiloh Ch.
Smith
Cart
Tiley
Polk
Corinth Road
Ridge Road
Hamburg
Cr.
Lick
Ridge Road
Griers Ford
EXPLANATION;
UNION: POSITION ON MORNING OF 6TH
UNION: POSITION ON NIGHT OF 6TH
UNION: POSITION ON MORNING OF 7TH
UNION: POSITION ON NIGHT OF 7TH
CONFEDERATE: POSITION ON MORNING OF 6TH
CONFEDERATE: POSITION ON NIGHT OF 6TH
EXTREME POINT OF CONFEDERATE ADVANCE
CAVALRY
TENTS
N

bleeding unconsciously for a short time he fell from his horse in a fainting condition, and shortly after expired in the arms of Governor Isham G. Harris, of Tennessee, and in the presence of a few friends who collected around him. The news was not generally known to the army that evening.

General G. T. Beauregard, second in command, was on his horse surrounded by his staff and escort, some little distance in the rear and on the left. Late in the afternoon he decided to call off the troops to give them a rest. The encampments of full five Federal divisions, well stocked with all the comforts and luxuries possible at that period of the war, were occupied by the Confederates, many of whom availed themselves of the spoils to an extent which did not add to their efficiency the next day. Colonel Forrest and his men slept comparatively little that night. Throwing out a line of scouts, mostly clad in Federal blue overcoats captured that day, he advanced to the front and went down to the river bank, where he could see and hear the movements of boats bringing up reenforcements.

Seeking General James R. Chalmers far in the night, he declared that something must be done quickly or the army would be whipped before noon the next day. Getting no satisfaction from this source, he sought General Beauregard, and after explaining his views was ordered back to his regiment. Early Monday morning the Federals, greatly reenforced, made a forward movement. Forrest was again placed on the right flank, and was actively engaged. The Confederates had no reenforcements, were worn out, badly armed and scattered, and greatly weakened. All the ground gained the previous day was lost by two o'clock.

Forrest was engaged with skirmishers as early as five o'clock Monday morning, and compelled to fall

back upon the infantry, and at seven o'clock General Hardee ordered him to retire for the time being. The battle raged all along the lines for several hours with varying results. There were charges and countercharges. It was a bloody field, as sanguinary in proportion to numbers as Gettysburg, on which deeds of valor by officers and men illustrated the courage and endurance of the American soldier. The cavalry could not be used effectively owing to heavy timber and undergrowth through which the troops had to move. Colonel Forrest for a time looked after stragglers and forced them back to the front. About eleven o'clock General Breckenridge placed him on the right flank, where he was in a heavy engagement for two hours. After that General Beauregard ordered him to move his regiment near the center, where it was dismounted and employed in skirmishing with the Federals as the Confederate infantry began to retreat. Breckenridge covered the retreat and went into bivouac that night about four and a half miles from Pittsburg Landing, while Forrest was sent to guard against or report aggressive movements on Lick Creek. The nature of the country did not permit rapid retreat or pursuit. The losses of the Confederates in the two days' fight were stated as seventeen hundred and twenty-eight killed, eight thousand and twelve wounded, and nine hundred and fifty-nine missing; total, ten thousand six hundred and ninety-nine. The Federal losses were seventeen hundred and fifty-four killed, eighty-four hundred and eight wounded, twenty-eight hundred and eighty-five missing; total, thirteen thousand and forty-seven.

Tuesday morning, the 8th, General Breckenridge fell back a few miles to a tenable position, leaving the cavalry thrown well to the front facing the Federal lines. That morning Colonel Forrest, with only about

one hundred and fifty men, found himself facing on the road to Monterey, a heavy Federal force advancing in three lines. He was soon reenforced by a company of Wirt Adams's regiment under Captain Isaac Harrison, a squadron of the Eighth Texas, two hundred and twenty strong, and a detachment of Kentuckians under Captain John Morgan, making a total force of about eight hundred cavalry. Forming these in line, Forrest made a stand to await the remainder of his regiment and other reenforcements. Two battalions of cavalry and a regiment of infantry quickly advanced to attack this thin line. The infantry regiment, with fixed bayonets, moved forward in fine style, but in crossing a stream there was some break in the movement, and Forrest, seeing an opportunity, ordered a countercharge. The Confederates, who had been partly concealed behind a slight ridge, dashed forward, and at a distance of twenty paces fired an effective volley from their double-barreled shotguns. The Federal cavalry, taken by surprise, broke and ran over their infantry support, causing great commotion and some loss of men and horses. Forrest's men dashed into the mass of struggling and confused Federals and used their revolvers and sabers with some effect, killing about fifteen men, wounding twenty-five, and taking seventy prisoners.

The pursuit was continued only a few hundred yards. Forrest himself dashed ahead of the routed force, and came within fifty yards of the main line. His own men halted, and he was left almost alone. Turning around he was assailed on all sides by the Federals, who shouted, "Kill him! Knock him off! Shoot him! Stick him!" and other cheering salutations. Drawing a revolver, he fired right and left, and spurred his horse to run the terrible gantlet. In a moment he was out of immediate danger, but was

severely wounded by a pistol-ball, which, entering near the spine, ranged around on the left side and lodged in his hip. In this desperate strait he reached down, caught up a rather small Federal soldier, swung him around and held him to the rear of his saddle as a shield until he was well out of danger, and then gladly dropped his prisoner, who doubtless saved his life. His horse was mortally wounded, but escaped with his rider through a shower of bullets. Rejoining his command behind the ridge, Colonel Forrest went to the nearest hospital for surgical treatment. The surgeon could not find the ball, and expressed a fear that the wound was fatal. The colonel set out for Corinth, accompanied by his adjutant, J. P. Strange, and reached that place late at night. On the way he suffered so that he had to dismount and ride in a buggy. The noble horse lived to reach Corinth, but died a few hours later.

The force which Forrest encountered that morning proved to have been led by General W. T. Sherman in person. In his report to General Grant, dated Headquarters Fifth Division, Tuesday, April 8, 1862, he said: "With the cavalry placed at my command and two brigades of my fatigued troops I went this morning out on the Corinth road . . . and at the fork of the road found the enemy in both roads. . . . After reconnoitering up the right road I ordered two advance companies of the Ohio Seventy-seventh, Colonel Hildebrand, to deploy forward as skirmishers, and the regiment itself formed into lines with an interval of one hundred yards. In this order we advanced cautiously until the skirmishers were engaged. Taking it for granted this disposition would clear the camp (in view), I held Colonel Dickey's Fourth Illinois Cavalry ready for the charge. The enemy's cavalry came down boldly at a charge, led by General Forrest

in person,* breaking through our line of skirmishers, when the regiment of infantry, without cause, broke, threw away their muskets, and fled. The ground was admirably adapted for the defense of infantry against cavalry, being miry and crowned with fallen timber. As the regiment of infantry broke, Dickey's cavalry began to discharge their carbines and fell into disorder. I instantly sent orders to the rear for the brigade to form in line of battle. The broken infantry and cavalry rallied on this line, and as the enemy's cavalry came to it our cavalry in turn charged and drove them from the field. I advanced the entire brigade over this same ground, and sent Colonel Dickey's cavalry a mile farther on the road. . . . I am satisfied the enemy's infantry and artillery passed Lick Creek this morning, traveling all of last night, and then he left to his rear all the cavalry, which has protected his retreat. But signs of disorder and confusion mark the whole road. The check sustained by us at the fallen timber delayed our advance so that night came upon us before the wounded were provided for and the dead buried; and our troops being fagged out by three days' hard fighting, exposure, and privation, I ordered them back to their camps, where they now are." †

In line with the foregoing extract from General Sherman's report, and corroborative of other statements here made, the following is taken from the report of Major Thomas Harrison, who commanded the Texans, to Colonel J. A. Wharton. This is dated Camp near Corinth, April 11, 1862. "Being left by you in command of the Texas Rangers, two hundred

* Colonel Forrest was not yet known as general on the Southern side.

† Sherman's Memoirs, vol. i, p. 243.

and twenty strong, Tuesday morning last, I remained in the rear of our retreating enemy until evening, when information was brought me by a member of Colonel Forrest's cavalry that a small body of the enemy's cavalry had appeared on our right flank. I proceeded with my command and a company (forty men) of Forrest's cavalry to the point occupied by the enemy apparently in force. . . . Deeming it unadvisable to attack so strong a force in advantageous position, I retired to avoid a flank movement. . . . Met Captain I. F. Harrison, of Colonel Wirt Adams's cavalry, with about forty men of that regiment. . . . Being joined by him I returned to my position near the hospital, where I found Colonel Forrest commanding in person the company of his cavalry mentioned above. On consultation with him it was determined to charge the enemy then formed for battle to our front. The charge was immediately executed. The front line of the enemy's infantry with cavalry in its rear was put to flight; a portion of the latter only after a hard hand-to-hand fight with the Rangers had attested their superior skill in the use and management of pistol and horse. My command not having sabers and our shots being exhausted, I ordered a retreat in front of a strong line of infantry. Shortly afterward I was ordered by General Breckenridge to the rear of his infantry and artillery. I suppose forty or fifty of the enemy were killed on the ground, and doubtless many more were wounded. We captured forty-three prisoners. My loss was two killed, seven wounded, and one missing. . . . Colonel Forrest was, I learn, slightly wounded. . . . The Rangers sustained the ancient name they bear."

As a result of this sharp engagement the Federal advance was checked, and was not resumed on Corinth for many days. Colonel Forrest was granted

a leave of absence for sixty days, and returned to his home in Memphis, where he seemed to recover rapidly. Learning, however, that there were dissensions and mutterings in his regiment on account of an insufficient commissariat, as well as for other reasons and conditions common to volunteer regiments, he left Memphis on the 29th day of April, and returned to his command at Corinth. A few days later, in making a reconnaissance in front of Corinth, he jumped his horse over a log, and the jolt caused the bullet to move in his hip and gave him intense pain. Returning to camp he demanded that his surgeon, Dr. J. B. Cowan, at once extract the ball. This required two attempts, and prostrated the colonel to his bed for two weeks. Recovering from this ordeal, his vigorous constitution asserted itself, and Forrest was soon called to a wider field of action.

At the earnest request of Colonel James E. Saunders, a prominent citizen of north Alabama, over sixty years old, who had taken an active part as a volunteer staff-officer, General Beauregard reluctantly consented to give up Colonel Forrest and place him in command of cavalry operations in the rear of Chattanooga. Papers were made out, and Forrest was recommended for promotion to rank as brigadier-general. His regiment had been reduced by death, disease, and wounds from about six hundred effectives to less than half that number. It gave him great concern to think of leaving the men who had followed him so faithfully, but he was permitted to select a few officers and about twenty men to accompany him as escort. These men were placed under command of his brother, Captain William Forrest. Leaving north Mississippi with the valiant old Colonel Saunders and this escort on the 11th of June, 1862, the party set out through the country, and reached Chattanooga on the 19th of that month.

Colonel Forrest was rejoiced to find at Chattanooga the Eighth Texas Cavalry, better known as Texas Rangers, then commanded by Colonel, afterward Major-General, John A. Wharton. These splendid riders, some four hundred strong, from the Lone Star State, were to his mind ideal soldiers. In addition to these the command soon organized consisted of the First Louisiana Cavalry, Colonel John W. Scott, soon afterward detached and replaced by the First Georgia battalion under Colonel J. J. Morrison; the Second Georgia regiment cavalry, Colonel W. J. Lawton; one hundred Kentuckians under Colonel Woodward, and the escort. The brigade was crossed over the Tennessee River the 8th of July, and on the 9th was marched rapidly by two different routes to McMinnville, reaching there on the 11th. Here two companies of Spillers's battalion under Major Smith, and two independent companies under Captains Taylor and Waltham joined the force, bringing it up to about sixteen hundred effective men. Late on the afternoon of the 12th the expedition moved in the direction of Woodbury, reaching there about eleven o'clock at night. Here it was learned that the Federals had entered the village the day before and arrested and carried off to Murfreesboro every man, old and young, in the place. The women and children were in great distress, but Forrest assured them that their kinsmen should soon be restored, a promise which he made good.

It was eighteen miles to Murfreesboro; at one o'clock on the morning of the 13th the command was on the road with orders to keep well closed up. This was the colonel's birthday, and his birthplace was in an adjoining county. The head of the column halted a few miles out from Murfreesboro at 5 A. M., and scouts sent forward soon returned reporting that the Federal pickets were only half a mile distant. These,

fifteen in number, were captured by a detachment from Wharton's regiment without firing a gun, and brought before Forrest, and from them he learned that Colonel Duffield had been superseded the day before by Brigadier-General Thomas J. Crittenden, of Indiana, and learned also the location of the different commands in and around the town. These consisted of the Ninth Michigan Infantry, two companies of the Seventh Pennsylvania Cavalry, camped near each other in town; the Third Minnesota, and Hewett's battery of four guns a mile and a half beyond; while the jail, in which a number of Confederates and civilians were confined, was guarded by two companies of the Ninth Michigan and some small detachments.

Forrest quickly divided his force into three sections, formed in columns of fours, and advanced quietly on the sleeping town. Coming in sight of the tents, the order to charge was given, and the whole command thundered down the pike yelling like mad. Wharton, at the head of the Texans, was soon among the surprised Pennsylvanians. Some of them were killed, others taken prisoners, and others rushed over to the Michigan camp, where Colonel W. W. Duffield rallied his men and made a gallant resistance, and forced the Texans back some distance. Colonel Duffield was wounded, and the command fell upon Lieutenant-Colonel Parkhurst. Colonel Wharton, of the Rangers, was seriously wounded, and his command thrown into confusion. Parkhurst drew up his men within a stockade, added wagons and other impedimenta to his front, and made it warm for the Texans. The latter, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Walker, kept up a brisk fire, and waited for reenforcements, which came in due time. Forrest had charged straight to the jail, court-house, and hotel, and captured General Crittenden, his staff, and the provost guards,

but the Federals opened a heavy fire from the court-house, and this stronghold was taken by storm.

The jail was found to be on fire, which was extinguished with difficulty, and about a hundred and fifty prisoners released, among them two who had been sentenced to be executed that morning. The soldier who fired the jail to make a holocaust of the prisoners before he rushed to the court-house was identified, and it is said did not answer to roll-call when the prisoners were afterward brought before Colonel Forrest. Meantime a detachment of troops was sent to reenforce the Texans, and Forrest with a considerable force followed the Tennesseeans and Georgians who had gone to attack the camp beyond town, commanded by Colonel Lester, and met vigorous aggressive resistance. The Federals had moved out for the purpose of joining the main force in town, leaving a reserve of about one hundred men in camp. Forrest made a flank movement and captured most of these men after a sharp conflict. One Federal fired at Forrest several times from behind a wagon at short range. Finally, the colonel drew a pistol and shot him down.

Making a circuit back to Murfreesboro and leaving the Tennesseeans and Georgians to hold Colonel Lester at bay, he went to the aid of the Texans. Sending a flag of truce to Colonels Duffield and Parkhurst he stated that he had captured all the other troops, and demanded an unconditional surrender in order to prevent the further effusion of blood, and added the threat, which he used so often and so effectively at other times and places, that if he had to carry the stockade by storm he would not be responsible for the consequences. Both Colonels Duffield and Parkhurst had been wounded, and in the eight hours' hard fighting they had lost eleven killed and eighty-six wounded. At twelve o'clock they surrendered the command. Forrest

could have taken the place, but not without heavy loss. His ruse and threat answered a better purpose than an assault.

Leaving the prisoners under guard he promptly turned his attention to Colonel Lester's command, which had not surrendered, but was kept in check by the troops under Colonel Morrison, of Georgia. Forrest moved out on the road, sent in a flag of truce, and demanded another surrender, "to prevent further effusion of blood," and could truthfully say then that all the rest of the Federal forces in Murfreesboro had been captured. The ruse was again successful, but not until Colonel Lester was permitted to enter the town under an escort, and be convinced that the surrender had taken place. He returned to his command, and immediately surrendered about four hundred and fifty infantry and Captain John H. Hewett's Battery B, Kentucky Light Artillery, with three smooth-bore 6-pounders and one 10-pounder Parrott gun.

General Crittenden, the Federal commander, in his report claimed that Forrest had twenty-five hundred men, which was an overestimate, and complimented the gallantry of his own men in high and deserved terms, for they really put up a splendid fight; and but for the fact that Forrest surprised the garrison and cut through between the different commands and took them in by detail he would not have won such a sweeping victory. In his superb management and dash that day he evinced the high qualities which seldom ever failed him. His own officers were doubtful about taking this stockade, which had been so long and bravely defended, but his will-power and presence of mind swayed everything, and so he won when others would have abandoned the field. Knowing that there were numerous other Federal garrisons in the neighborhood, he hastily gathered together such Government stores

as could be carried away, destroyed the remainder, as well as depots and railroad bridges, etc., and before five o'clock was on the march to McMinnville, camping nine miles from Murfreesboro that night.

The prisoners were brought along, as well as the four pieces of artillery captured with horses and ammunition. Colonel Forrest stated in his official report that he captured ten or twelve hundred privates and non-commissioned officers. On the 14th the prisoners were placed in charge of Colonel Wharton, who was still able to ride. The entire command reached McMinnville the next night. The privates and non-commissioned officers were paroled there, and the commissioned officers were forwarded to Knoxville. The Federal losses at Murfreesboro seem to have been about twenty-three killed and one hundred and seventeen wounded. Forrest estimated that he had twenty-five killed and sixty wounded, which was probably under the real number—at least Colonel Duffield reported that he buried more Confederates than Federals.*

Major-General John P. McCown telegraphed General Bragg from Chattanooga on the 17th of July that —" Forrest captured two brigadier-generals, staff- and field-officers, and twelve hundred men, burned two hundred thousand dollars' worth of stores, captured sufficient stores with those burned to amount to five hundred thousand dollars, also took sixty wagons, three hundred mules, one hundred and fifty or two hundred horses, a field battery of four pieces, destroyed the railroad and depot at Murfreesboro, and lost sixteen or eighteen killed and twenty-five or thirty wounded." A writer on the Union side estimated the loss to the Government at nearly a million of dollars. Such a victory won by freshly organized and poorly armed

* Rebellion Records, vol. xv, p. 1.

troops, without artillery, created great surprise, but the troops were better armed when they came away, as well as better clothed. Among the wounded on the Confederate side was the heroic old Colonel Saunders, from Alabama, who was shot through his lungs, supposed mortally, but who recovered to see much more service as a volunteer staff-officer, and only died in 1898 in Memphis.

The Confederates claimed to have paroled seventeen hundred prisoners at McMinnville, including one hundred staff employees. Be that as it may, those paroled were given two days' rations, and when started North were apparently in the best of spirits. Forrest sent out scouts in all directions and rested at McMinnville until the 18th, and then put his column in motion in the direction of Lebanon, fifty miles distant, where it was reported five hundred Federal cavalry were stationed. Reaching the neighborhood of that place on the morning of the 20th he was disappointed to find that the enemy were on the road to Nashville and pursuit was impracticable. Throwing out pickets to guard against surprise, he rested a day with his men, and enjoyed the hospitality of the people, who were mostly strong Southern sympathizers. His movements were not unnoticed. The name of Forrest began to count for something among officers on the other side, as the following despatches indicate:

BOWLING GREEN, *July* 20, 1862.

Colonel J. F. MILLER, *Commanding:*

Forrest is at Lebanon, Tenn., with a large rebel force. Without doubt he will move on Nashville or Gallatin, or probably will make his way to Kentucky.

S. D. BRUCE,* *Colonel Commanding.*

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* Rebellion Records, vol. vi, part ii, pp. 11, 190.

TULLAHOMA, *July* 22, 1862.

Colonel J. B. FRY: I have information this morning . . . that Forrest started from McMinnville this morning for Lebanon on Friday with one thousand men. He was to have been back Saturday, but has not returned. . . .

W. S. SMITH,* *Brigadier-General Commanding.*

The prediction of Colonel Bruce was well founded, for early on the morning of the 21st Forrest moved out on the pike for the Hermitage, near Nashville. Reaching there at 1 P. M., he halted for an hour, and met a party of ladies and gentlemen who were celebrating the first anniversary of the battle of Manassas.

Pushing forward toward Nashville, Forrest learned from scouts that General Nelson had gone toward Murfreesboro with thirty-five hundred men, mostly infantry. At Stone River, seven miles east of Nashville, he came upon and captured about twenty pickets in a stockade, though some escaped to the city. Swinging around to the Murfreesboro pike he captured some of the picket force near the lunatic asylum, the rest escaping. An independent Confederate force happened about the same time to make a dash on a picket-post on the Franklin pike, and thus the impression was made in the city that the place was invested by a large force. Forrest next moved on and captured a small outpost and twenty prisoners at the bridge over Mill Creek, four miles from the heart of the city. Following the creek half a mile northward he captured forty more men, and left a company to destroy that bridge; moving a mile farther up the creek to Antioch station the little garrison made a stand, but was quickly routed by Colonel Walker's Texas Rangers. Thirty-five prisoners were taken there with arms and supplies, and the station-house, cars, and a bridge were burned.

* Rebellion Records, vol. vi, part ii, p. 200.

A detachment was sent toward Murfreesboro, destroying some railroad wood, and taking fifteen prisoners.

After this day's work Forrest withdrew by a narrow pathway and encamped in the woods about a mile from the pike, where his prisoners were paroled. General Nelson, apprised of Forrest's movements, marched back from Murfreesboro in great haste, and his columns could be heard passing on the pike by Forrest's men nearly all night. Nelson being safely in Nashville, Forrest started back the other way early next morning. He had not lost a man during the raid. Six miles from Murfreesboro he turned east toward McMinnville. Nelson followed again, and reaching Murfreesboro with a tired, jaded lot of men, disgusted with trotting on foot up and down the road after Forrest's phantom cavalry, gave up the pursuit, and denounced it as folly in his own forceful way. Forrest had caused large forces to be withdrawn from north Mississippi and north Alabama, and materially changed the situations and dispositions of Federal troops. He proceeded hurriedly to McMinnville and rested there some time.

The following despatches indicate something of the stir Forrest created in that period:

HEADQUARTERS, HUNTSVILLE, *July* 22, 1862.

General SMITH, *Tullahoma:*

Forrest is now between Nashville and Murfreesboro, and destroyed three bridges nine miles from Nashville yesterday.

D. C. BUELL.

MURFREESBORO, *July* 24, 1862.

Major-General BUELL:

Twenty-third Brigade has passed. Forrest has returned on the Jefferson pike. In three days I will take the field and try to clear out the country. . . .

W. NELSON, *General.*

TULLAHOMA, *July* 22, 1862.

Colonel J. B. FRY: One of my scouting parties last night captured a morning report of a rebel force encamped near McMinnville. It is addressed to General Forrest, Chapel Hill, which lies between Shelbyville and Franklin. The rebel has not had time to advise him of its capture. Can not we capture him there or at Shelbyville, where I think his army is?

W. S. SMITH, *General.*

MURFREESBORO, *July* 26, 1862.

Major-General BUELL: John Morgan is retreating from Kentucky and will come in at Sparta. I want cavalry, and I want General Jackson, who is now at Nashville, to command it. . . . I can settle this part of the country and stop Morgan and Forrest and be in position to receive any forces from Chattanooga, if I can get my orders obeyed. If Morgan and Forrest get together they will have three thousand five hundred well-mounted cavalry. General Manson arrived this morning.

W. NELSON, *General.**

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* Rebellion Records, vol. xxii, p. 213.

CHAPTER V.

OPERATIONS ON BRAGG'S FLANK.

On the 24th of July, 1862, Forrest wrote from McMinnville to Major W. L. Clay, A. A. A.-G., at Knoxville, reporting that he had no public property captured across the Tennessee River by Colonel Wharton's Eighth Texas Cavalry, except eight wagons and four mules to a wagon needed by his brigade. He had retained the captured battery also, and one hundred muskets for recruits secured. He had two engines and all the transportation between the break across Mill Creek and Murfreesboro. Was of the opinion that the enemy would fall back with most of his force to Murfreesboro, and in conclusion said: "We have succeeded in drawing ten thousand men from Athens *via* Columbia to Nashville and to Murfreesboro, and also causing them to move three times in the last five days between Nashville and Murfreesboro."

On the 4th of August Major-General E. Kirby Smith, commanding the department with headquarters at Knoxville, addressing Forrest as general, caused the following order to be issued to him: "General Bragg having requested it, the major-general directs that you remain in that section of the country where you are now operating. Starnes's regiment, Howard's battalion, and Huwald's mountain howitzer battery have been ordered to you. Scott's brigade, consisting of his own and Lawton's regiments, have been ordered to Kingston. . . . They should have already reached

there." On the same date Lieutenant E. Cunningham, acting aide to General Bragg, wrote the same to General Forrest, also stating that it would probably be two weeks before the reenforcements mentioned would reach him; that Colonel Crawford's regiment of Georgia cavalry would report to him in a few days; that his brigade would be reorganized, and that his commission as brigadier-general, some time since received, would be forwarded as soon as a safe opportunity offered.*

This commission, dated July 21st, was received by General Forrest some time later. Governor Isham G. Harris had gone on to Richmond to urge Forrest's promotion, which seemed to come rather slowly. General Nelson announced that he would hunt Forrest himself, as he had about twelve hundred cavalry. Moves and counter moves followed, but nothing of importance occurred for some little time. About the 10th of August General Forrest had occasion to ride across the Cumberland Mountains to Chattanooga, leaving Lieutenant-Colonel Hood, of the Second Georgia Cavalry, in command. Shortly after he left, a Federal force of about three thousand infantry and eight hundred cavalry was reported moving on McMinnville, and Colonel Hood fell back eastward to Sparta, a distance of some twenty-five miles. General Forrest rejoined the command there after an absence of four days, during which time he had ridden two hundred miles. Skirmishing followed for a week or ten days, after which the command moved over to Smithville, and then back to Woodbury in the Federal rear. Resting a few hours, Forrest made a feint on Murfreesboro, now strongly fortified and not to be surprised again; but when within eight miles of that place he turned left

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxiii, p. 743.

to the branch railroad leading from Tullahoma to McMinnville, captured a picket-post of twenty men near Manchester, and then proceeded east, destroying the road and bridges, until he was again within ten miles of McMinnville. Forrest was well aware of Bragg's intended movement into Kentucky. Under date of Chattanooga, August 7, 1862, the latter wrote to Forrest: "You can not cope with the enemy as he is now located. My cavalry is slow coming in, so that you have not been reenforced as I desired, but when it comes you shall have the whole. In the meantime cover our front well with a view to the future. We are now crossing and massing our troops with a view to advance. The enemy has had cavalry as high as Dunlap. . . . Have a mere corps of observation where you are and throw the balance of your force into the Sequatchie Valley to prevent incursions. After these dispositions, if you can possibly be spared, I should like to see you." On the 22d of August a staff-officer wrote to Forrest: "In reply to yours of August 19th the commanding general directs me to say that as soon as you accomplish your present object you will return, in accordance with instructions, and prepare your command for other services. Enemy reported approaching up the Sequatchie Valley. Artillery will be sent soon as possible." *

Meantime various columns had been organized to hasten in and catch Forrest, and he was aware of his danger. Nearing McMinnville he determined to pass around and take a stand at Altamont, and await the advance of Bragg's army. The aim was to avoid fighting, escape from the meshes by which he was enclosed, and come in touch again with the main army, knowing that he had remained full long in Middle Ten-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxiii, p. 770.

nessee. His force was not estimated by the Federals at more than fourteen or fifteen hundred men, and was, perhaps, not more than one thousand effectives. Hard, active service had thinned the ranks. Endeavoring to get to Altamont his scouts one day reported a heavy force coming down the road in his front. He wisely moved back a short distance, crossed into the dry bed of a creek near the road, and let the column pass, the same as he did when General Nelson's command marched up the pike to Nashville, and then resumed the march. At another point he encountered a force of infantry with artillery. This was composed of three regiments of Wood's brigade and four guns that had been encamped near McMinnville, and had been sent out to cut off Forrest. The general made a flank movement, passed around, and escaped. He knew when to run and when to fight. This was a time to avoid a fight. Bragg was already impatient because he had held out so long on the western side of the Cumberland Mountains, and Forrest felt his displeasure afterward. On this occasion a few shots of shell and musketry were fired by the Federals, and the Confederates lost a few horses and mules on the way back, but not a single man.

After many narrow escapes and close calls, the "Wizard of the Saddle," with what was left of his command and the four pieces of artillery captured at Murfreesboro, joined the advance-guard of Major-General Braxton Bragg's army at Sparta on the 3d of September, 1862, and was gratified to learn that he would be allowed to retain the four guns, and also that the four Alabama companies of his old regiment, under Bocot, would be added to his command. He had an interview with General Bragg at his headquarters some twenty miles in the rear of the advance, and was ordered to throw his brigade back toward the rear of

Buell's army, then moving toward Nashville, and to harass him as much as possible. Buell moved rapidly, and soon abandoned that part of the country. When Forrest reached McMinnville he learned that the Federal vanguard was ten hours ahead, but he came up with it at Woodbury, and soon reoccupied Murfreesboro, where he saved the court-house from being burned by some irresponsible Federal stragglers. Following resolutely, he had frequent skirmishes with Buell's rear-guard and flankers on to Nashville, which prevented further straggling and raids on farmhouses. For nothing keeps an army so well closed up as the enemy's cavalry skirmishing on three sides. Not only this, but Forrest often had the supreme effrontery to run up his artillery, and use it so effectively as to compel the infantry to form in line of battle and drive him back. This suited him exactly, and he had no objection to being repulsed, even if it occurred every hour. Crossing the Cumberland River, a few miles east of Nashville, he kept up the same tactics, and was joined by General Wheeler.

About the 8th of September Forrest reached southern Kentucky and reported in person to General Bragg. On the 10th he reached Glasgow, and a few days later the following special order, already virtually given, was issued from Bragg's headquarters:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
GLASGOW, KY., *September* 14, 1862.

(Special Order, No. 7.)

The following cavalry force to be commanded by Brigadier-General N. B. Forrest is assigned to the right wing of the Mississippi, and will report to Major-General Polk forthwith. First Alabama (W. W.) Allen; Second Georgia (W. J.) Lawton; Fourth Tennessee (J. P.) Murray; Forrest's regiment (Third Tennessee Cavalry), four companies (J. F.) Lay's Confederate regiment.

alry under Colonel A. A. Russell, and a battery under Captain Freeman and Lieutenant John W. Morton, constituting a brigade under the command of Brigadier-General Forrest.

Major-General John C. Breckenridge came upon the scene and assumed command of all the troops, bringing with him a force of some three thousand men. General Forrest moved up to La Vergne, and to his force was added the Eighth Tennessee and Gunter's Alabama battalion. Strong expeditions were sent out to intercept Federal foraging parties and to reconnoiter. The Confederates in front of Nashville by the 5th of November numbered about thirty-five hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry under Brigadier-General Hanson. Forrest matured the idea of taking Nashville, and obtained General Breckenridge's consent. The attack was to be made November 6th. The advance began at daylight, and the pickets at the lunatic asylum were driven in and captured. All was ready when an order came from General Breckenridge, under instructions from General Bragg, to recall the troops. This was done, but Forrest was much disappointed, and moving across to the Franklin pike joined for a time with his troops in a heavy skirmish with the Federals, in which artillery was freely used on both sides. After this, leaving forces to picket the different roads, he fell back to La Vergne.

Again he was ordered to report in person to General Bragg, who, after the battle of Perryville, had swung around with his army by Knoxville and Chattanooga to Murfreesboro. There he was ordered to take command of a brigade and move to Columbia, Tenn., with a view to crossing the Tennessee River on an expedition into West Tennessee. In vain he plead that the regiments were not suitably armed or equipped with

guns for such work. Bragg was inexorable, and Forrest obeyed orders. A promise was made that proper arms would be supplied at Columbia, but this was not done. The command, about eighteen hundred strong, reached Columbia December 6, 1862.

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CHAPTER VI.

BATTLE OF PARKER'S CROSSROADS.

FOUR days after Forrest reached Columbia he received peremptory orders to cross the river into West Tennessee. Again he appealed to the general of the army for better arms and equipments, but in vain, for he was given to understand that he was to go—guns or no guns. Whether Bragg had made up his mind to sacrifice Forrest's command if need be to make a diversion in the direction of Memphis between the armies of Grant and Rosecrans, or thought the resourceful brigadier would take care of himself as usual, does not appear. Forrest, however, was the man above all others for such a desperate enterprise. Sending ahead a small detachment of troops and workmen he caused two small flatboats to be constructed near Clifton, and concealed them in a slough on the east side of an island. This work had to be conducted with the utmost caution to avoid discovery. The little army of forlorn hope reached this place on the 15th of December twenty-one hundred strong, and of this number not more than fifteen hundred were effective. The troops were Starnes's Fourth Tennessee, Dibbrell's Eighth, Biffle's Ninth, Russell's Fourth Alabama, Cox's Tennessee battalion, Woodward's two Kentucky companies, Captain William Forrest's scouts, Freeman's battery, and the general's escort. Napier's battalion, four hundred strong, joined afterward at Union City, but was too poorly armed to be of real service at that time. Here

was a most desperate undertaking in midwinter—going into the enemy's country as now occupied, the river patrolled by gunboats, and Federal troops scattered everywhere. Forrest felt all this keenly, but went to work with celerity. The small boats would carry only twenty-five men and horses at a time; the river was three-quarters of a mile wide; there was a pelting cold rain, and the men had no tents. Pickets were scattered up and down the river to look out for gunboats, and the crossing, effected continuously, occupied almost a day and night.

On the morning of the 17th the command moved out eight miles and stopped to dry clothing, examine caps and ammunition, and groom horses. Fortunately for the command, a citizen, sent ahead by Forrest for the purpose of securing caps for shotguns and pistols from his agents within the lines, reported that night with fifty thousand caps, an ample supply for the time being. On the morning of the 18th he moved toward Lexington, and when near there encountered pickets, and back of them a considerable Federal force, and a sharp engagement ensued. The Federals had three regiments: the Eleventh Illinois, under Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll; the Second Tennessee, under Colonel Hawkins; the Fifth Ohio Cavalry, three hundred strong, under Adjutant Harrison, and a battery. Colonel Ingersoll had marched out to Beech Creek, five miles east of Lexington, and was proceeding farther eastward, when Captain O'Hara joined him with sixty-eight men, and reported that the Confederates, about one thousand strong, were advancing. Colonel Ingersoll slowly withdrew in good order. Captain Frank B. Gurley, sent forward by Forrest with twenty men in advance of his battalion, had a slight skirmish with the advance-guard, and captured one or two of their number. The bridge at Beech Creek was dismantled, and the Second

Tennessee Cavalry (Federal) was drawn up in line on the west bank, but was driven back by a heavy fire from the other side. In twenty minutes Forrest had the bridge-sills replaced with fence-rails, and Gurley's men passed over. Meanwhile Colonel Ingersoll formed all his troops in a good position in the edge of some timber.

The Federals made a gallant stand, but were driven back with loss on both sides. Another stand was made near the town, with artillery and cavalry well posted. Forrest, with Dibbrell's and Biffle's regiments and his escort, threw himself on the Federal line and broke it, leaving Colonel Ingersoll's regiment and a section of artillery to face a superior force. The Fourth Alabama was subjected to a heavy fire, and Captain Gurley made a detour up a ravine to the right to a point not more than one hundred yards from the two guns, and with his squadron in advance charged at full speed upon the section. The gunners fought with desperation, but were run over. This, in conjunction with Forrest's charge, stampeded the Second Tennessee and Ohio Cavalry, and the day was lost. Forrest's main command was concentrated, and the battle was over. The two 3-inch Rodman guns of the Fourteenth Indiana Battery, handled so well under Lieutenant McGuire, were held and used by Forrest until the end of the war. Colonel Ingersoll afterward reported eleven killed and eleven wounded, and besides the wounded, one hundred and forty-seven prisoners—total, one hundred and fifty-eight, including six officers. The guns, he says, were taken with every man but one, and a moment after he was himself taken. Forrest, in his report, says he captured two guns, one hundred and fifty prisoners, including Colonel Ingersoll and Major L. A. Kerr, also some seventy horses, which were immediately put in service in the batteries. These accounts substantially agree.

Ingersoll estimated the Confederate force at five thousand, with eight 12-pounder guns. It was Forrest's policy to always exaggerate his own forces. Later on in this campaign, when he captured some drums, he had them beaten at night at wide distances apart to create the impression that he had a large infantry force on the field. According to Colonel Ingersoll's report, he had only a total effective force of seven hundred and seventy-three men. Those who escaped fled to Jackson, closely pursued. Forrest followed, and made a feint on the little city, which was garrisoned by a heavy force, and it was known to the Confederate leader that General Grant was hurrying troops to the protection of railroads and fortified places. Colonel Dibbrell was sent north that night, reached Carroll Station on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and at daylight fired into a passing train and captured a stockade with one hundred prisoners, and ammunition, stores, tents, etc. Four hundred of Dibbrell's men were still armed with flint-locks, and part of these were exchanged for better guns. Dibbrell rejoined Forrest at Spring Creek on the morning of the 20th. The Fourth Alabama and Second Tennessee battalions were sent south of Jackson to destroy bridges and other property on the two railroads runing through to Corinth and Bolivar, and Forrest continued to menace Jackson, as if seriously intending to assault the place, and really drove in both cavalry and infantry with his artillery and flank movements. The Federal troops engaged were the Forty-third, Sixty-first, and Eleventh Illinois, Fifth Ohio, and one company of the Second West Tennessee. Forrest had only Starnes's and Biffle's regiments and Major Woodward's two Kentucky companies besides his escort and artillery.

The Union forces within Jackson were probably ten thousand strong, with thirty pieces of artillery. On the

morning of the 20th the entire Confederate force, except the Fourth Alabama—left to keep up appearances—moved rapidly north. The command was divided. Colonel Starnes moved on Humboldt, captured the stockade and over one hundred prisoners, and burned supplies, depot, trestle and bridge, and also took four caissons, with horses and harness, and five hundred stands of arms. Dibbrell, with his regiment and two pieces of artillery under Lieutenant Morton, was sent to take the stockade and destroy the bridge at Forked Deer Creek, but was repulsed. Forrest reached and charged on Trenton at three o'clock that afternoon, the 20th, but found the place well defended, and had two men killed and one wounded. His artillery was brought into play, and a surrender was signified in a few minutes. Forrest claimed to have captured seven hundred prisoners, though Colonel Jacob Fry, the commander, admitted to only about two hundred and fifty men, including himself, of the Sixty-first Illinois, Colonel Hawkins, Second Tennessee Cavalry, and nine officers of the One Hundred and Twenty-second Illinois Infantry and the Fourth Illinois Cavalry. Forrest's force present was Biffle's regiment, Cox's battalion, the escort company, and Freeman's battery.

The entire number of prisoners now on hand and brought up later amounted to about twelve hundred. All were paroled; the officers and men of Hawkins's regiment allowed to return home; the remainder, some eight or nine hundred, were sent, under escort commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel N. D. Collins, to Columbus, Ky., to be turned over to a Federal commander. The general spent the night in paroling prisoners and destroying supplies not needed. The capture and destruction of property amounted to several hundred thousand dollars.

On the morning of the 21st he burned the depot

with six hundred bales of cotton, two hundred barrels of pork, and a large quantity of tobacco in hogsheads, which had been used as breastworks. Russell's regiment, the rear-guard, gave a fine account of itself, repulsing an infantry column at Spring Creek and reaching Trenton, as well as Starnes's and Dibbrell's regiments, on the morning of the 21st, when the entire command moved toward Union City. Two companies of Federals were captured at Rutherford Station, and trestles and bridges were destroyed on to Kenton Station, where Colonel Thomas J. Kenney, of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois, with part of his command—some two hundred and fifty men—was captured, also twenty-two sick men in the hospital, who were paroled. The afternoon was mainly occupied in burning about seven miles of trestle, and the following day, the 22d, some fifteen miles of track and trestle in the Obion bottom were destroyed, also some more stockades. The prisoners taken were paroled.

Reports came that a heavy force of Federals, estimated at ten thousand, was coming up from Jackson; yet Forrest determined to advance to Union City, twenty miles distant. Reaching there at 4 P. M. on the 23d, he dashed in and captured the place without firing a gun. A day or two was spent in destroying railroad bridges, masonry, and trestles over the north and south forks of the Obion River. By Christmas evening a clean sweep had been made of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad from Jackson, Tenn., to Moscow, Ky.; only one bridge was left. It was now time to start back. On the morning of the 26th the command, which had increased somewhat in numbers, if not in strength, was started for Dresden, twenty miles distant. That day the bridge on the branch road running to Paducah was burned. Little more was left to be done on that line. At night the command reached Dresden, destroyed all

Government supplies found, and tore up the railroad. Next day (27th), still on the march, it was learned that two brigades of infantry were moving out to intercept the command. The river bridges were down, and the enemy guarded all the crossings.

One old bridge, half-way between McKenzie and McLemoresville, supposed to be impassable, had been overlooked; Forrest made for this, and all through the night of the 27th labored with his men to erect or brace up a causeway through the miry bottoms a quarter of a mile on each side, and to strengthen the old bridge. On the morning of the 28th he drove over the first wagon with his own hands; the artillery, long loaded train, and troops followed. It was a narrow escape from a dangerous dilemma. The Federals were hunting for him, but not in such a place as that. While the work was going on Colonel C. L. Dunham marched a Federal brigade of infantry directly across Forrest's line of retreat at a point only five miles away. When the Confederates came out of the bottoms and reached McLemoresville Dunham's rear-guard had just passed; other brigades were in the immediate neighborhood, and could have easily surrounded and captured Forrest had their commanders but known where he was.

On the west, a few miles away, was a brigade composed of the Seventy-seventh, Thirty-ninth, and Sixty-third Ohio, under Colonel John W. Fuller; while Generals J. C. Sullivan and I. N. Haynie were marching from Trenton to unite with Dunham. General G. M. Dodge and the First Brigade, composed of the Second, Seventh, and Fifty-second Illinois, and the Third Brigade, made up of the Seventh, Fiftieth, and Fifty-seventh Illinois regiments, two batteries of the Missouri Light Artillery, the Fifth Ohio, and Stewart's cavalry, occupied the country to the front and south of Forrest,

and these forces were strengthened at Purdy by a section of artillery and the Fifty-eighth Illinois regiment, and General Clinton B. Fisk was at Columbus, Ky., begging for permission to take four thousand men and go out to "Defeat and skedaddle the entire rebel horde." General J. C. Sullivan wired General Grant on the 29th of December from Huntingdon: "I have Forrest in a tight place; the gunboats are up the river as far as Clinton, and have destroyed all the boats and ferries. My troops are moving on him in three directions, and I hope with success."

Forrest thus surrounded by well-trained and well-commanded troops was certainly in a close place. He had accomplished much in the destruction of Government and railroad property, and had interrupted communication, and prevented reenforcements from going to Rosecrans, then moving on Murfreesboro, or to the Union forces intended eventually to take Vicksburg. It was to be a run for the Tennessee River, forty miles distant, or a fight, and he decided on the latter. Emerging from the Obion bottoms in a somewhat bedraggled and dilapidated condition, Forrest's command moved out to the hamlet of McLemoresville, where he gave his men and horses a much-needed rest. However, he soon learned from scouts that a Federal force, estimated by country people to be ten thousand strong, was at Huntingdon, only twelve miles distant. So on the morning of the 29th Forrest moved on toward Lexington, and had to pass over rough and miry roads. The heavily loaded wagons and artillery were drawn slowly. That night he encamped within six miles of Lexington. General Dunham was coming on one side and General Fuller on the other. Captain William Forrest, with his Independents, was sent out to reconnoiter, and soon encountered Dunham's brigade, which took a position at Parker's crossroads, almost in Forrest's

front. Four companies were sent to look out for Fuller's brigade and report its advance, if made to reenforce Dunham. This detachment went wrong somehow, and thus when Forrest became engaged Fuller came upon his rear in the hour of Confederate victory and imperiled the whole command. Forrest had felt that he could easily handle one Federal brigade at a time.

Dunham had been driven back by twelve o'clock, and Colonel Biffle, coming up at this opportune moment, joined in the charge. Here Colonel T. A. Napier risked his life without orders and fell mortally wounded. The Confederates captured three pieces of artillery. Starnes and Russell reached the rear of the Federals and captured their wagon- and ammunition-train, and their defeat or capture seemed assured. Forrest sent in a flag of truce, demanding an unconditional surrender; but just in the moment of apparent acquiescence a heavy fire came from the rear. This was from Fuller's brigade, and was a complete and stunning surprise. Colonel Fuller was in immediate command of the brigade making the attack. Many horses were killed. Forrest lost the guns captured, and was only able to bring off six of his own. Some three hundred of Forrest's men, dismounted and fighting as infantry were captured; that all were not captured is a wonder. The Confederate leader here manifested his genius in the face of an appalling situation. He ordered his artillery out between the lines of enfilading fire, rallied his men, threw out a strong rear-guard, made a show of fight, and got away with the great bulk of his command.

The firing from his rear came while a flag of truce was flying and in a moment of supposed victory. If the detachment sent out to watch for Fuller had not lost its way this complete surprise could not have oc-

curred. The Confederate leader, however, never lost his head for a moment, but brought to bear the most skilful management possible under the circumstances. Using his ever-faithful escort and Dibbrell's regiment as a rear-guard he protected his retreat with surpassing address and show of force—even using his artillery and creating the impression that he was making an advance. This was all the easier to do by such a leader on account of the exaggerated reports put out in regard to the size of the force. The Federals estimated this to be from eight to ten thousand men, when it did not really amount to as many as twenty-five hundred, including the recruits picked up at different points. His fighting force at Parker's crossroads, including Biffle's regiment, which came up late, was about twenty-two hundred and fifty. Biffle had been detached twenty-four hours previously, and had captured and paroled one hundred and twenty officers and men seven miles east of Trenton. Starnes had also been detached, but both came to the battle.

General Sullivan, who came upon the field when the battle was over, telegraphed to General Grant: "We met Forrest seven thousand strong, and after a contest of four hours routed him with great slaughter. We have captured six guns, over three hundred prisoners, over five hundred horses, and a large number of wagons and teams, and a large quantity of small arms. Colonel Cox and Major Strange, Forrest's adjutant, and one aide-de-camp, and a number of other officers captured; Colonel Napier killed," etc. On the 2d of January, 1863, he added: "The rebel loss, as estimated by Forrest, is fifteen hundred killed, wounded, and missing. Their dead, I have good reason to believe, is two hundred; their prisoners over four hundred. My loss will not exceed one hundred killed and wounded; prisoners sixty-three. . . . I have

ordered Colonel Lawler, with three thousand of his old troops and eight pieces of artillery, to follow the retreating enemy to the river. Forrest's army is completely broken up. They are scattered over the country without ammunition. We need a good cavalry command to go through the country and pick them up." * Colonel Dunham reported twenty-three killed in his brigade, one hundred and thirty-nine wounded, and fifty-eight missing. A subsequent list showed two officers and twenty-five enlisted men killed, seven officers and one hundred and thirty-three men wounded, three officers and sixty-seven men captured—total, two hundred and thirty-seven.

Besides the death of Colonel Napier, a promising young officer, General Forrest lost by capture his adjutant-general, Major J. P. Strange. This occurred at a time when the surrender of Dunham's brigade was regarded as a certainty. So confident was Strange of this that he rode alone to the ordnance train of eighteen wagons and took possession of it and its escort of twenty-two men, and began to make an inventory of his capture; but just then Sullivan's men came upon the scene, and the major was taken prisoner. He was sent to Alton Prison, Illinois, and not exchanged for four or five months.

After the battle Forrest concentrated his command as quickly as possible and moved rapidly on Lexington —twelve miles distant, where the men and animals were fed and the wounded cared for. At two o'clock the next morning, January 1, 1863, the command was on the move toward Clifton. Ten miles out a halt was made for three hours, and there the prisoners, some three hundred in number, were paroled. Moving on the general was informed by scouts that a heavy force

* Rebellion Records, vol. xvii, part i, p. 552.

was coming out from Purdy to intercept him, and he found a force of some twelve hundred cavalry across his line of march. Dibbrell charged directly through the center; Biffle and Starnes charged right and left, and the road was soon cleared. The Federals lost some twenty killed and wounded and about fifty prisoners, while the Confederates did not lose a man. However, Lieutenant-Colonel W. K. M. Breckenridge, commanding the Sixth Tennessee Union Cavalry, reported only six prisoners lost on this occasion.

Forrest knew the importance of getting out of West Tennessee, and sent ahead to have the two sunken boats raised on the eastern side of the river to be brought over at a signal. His advance reached Clifton about noon January 1st, and he at once rushed over the artillery and ammunition and a few men. Once across, the guns were placed in position to protect the crossing if need be. Scouts were sent out to look for gunboats, but fortunately for the Confederates none appeared. Some of the men constructed rude rafts, and most of the horses were made to swim over. Fully one thousand were in the water at one time. The entire command of about twenty-one hundred men and horses, six pieces of artillery, and a train of wagons, with captured stores, crossed over the river in ten hours. This did not include quite the entire force, as one detachment of one hundred men and other small scattering parties crossed at different points, and afterward rejoined the main command. The Federal pursuit through mud, ice, and drenching cold rain or sleet was heavy, but not active. Forrest kept his men well in hand, and really encountered no serious check or obstacle in his forty miles' march from Parker's crossroads to Clinton.

He had been gone seventeen days; had marched about twenty miles a day, nearly half the time in rain

or snow; had fought one battle, and had numerous smaller engagements and skirmishes; killed, wounded, and captured about fourteen hundred of the Federal troops, including four colonels of regiments captured; had captured four pieces of artillery—losing three afterward; destroyed much railroad and Government property; cut Grant off from railroad communication with the North, so that rations and forage could not be issued in a regular way for two weeks, and caused Grant to change his base from the interior and return to La Grange and Grand Junction on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, besides preventing reenforcements from going to Rosecrans in front of Nashville.* All in all, this was, perhaps, one of Forrest's most remarkable campaigns, when the difficulties and the superior forces against him are taken into account. Starting in with about twenty-one hundred men all told, and picking up nearly five hundred raw recruits, losing nearly five hundred in killed, wounded, and captured, he recrossed the river with nearly or quite his

* On December 20, 1862, when General Grant with his army was at Oxford, Miss., confronting Pemberton and the Confederates, and Sherman was moving a large force from Memphis by river to take Vicksburg by getting to Pemberton's rear, Van Dorn with a force of mounted men appeared at Holly Springs, in Grant's rear, captured the garrison of fifteen hundred men under Colonel Murphy, of the Eighth Wisconsin, and destroyed a vast quantity of stores, valued at between three and five million dollars, including food, forage, and munitions of war. Grant was compelled to fall back in consequence, and he pronounced it a disgraceful capture to the officer commanding, and he adds: "At the same time Forrest got on the line of railroad between Jackson, Tenn., and Columbus, Ky., doing much damage to it. This cut me off from all communication with the North for more than two weeks, and that interval elapsed before rations of forage could be issued from stores in the regular way."—Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, vol. i, p. 433.

original number of men, all well armed and supplied with an abundance of captured ammunition, blankets, coffee, etc. Besides which he brought out five hundred surplus Enfield rifles and eighteen hundred blankets and knapsacks. Going in with seven pieces of artillery he brought out six, one having exploded in the battle. General Bragg was quite complimentary in his report to Richmond, and the Confederate Congress passed a vote of thanks to Brigadier-General Forrest and his troops.

NOTE.—It was while on this expedition and at Trenton, Tenn., that General Forrest came into possession of a handsome sword of the Damascus pattern, such as had been worn by officers of the old United States dragoons. This is the one which he had sharpened to a point and on the edge, and used so often in personal encounters from that time until the end of the war. It is still in the possession of a member of the Forrest family. The writer is assured by Captain William M. Forrest, Dr. J. B. Cowan, and other members of his staff and command, that, contrary to other statements, he wore his sword only on the left side and drew it with his right hand, though, being left-handed, or ambidextrous, he sometimes transferred it or his pistol, when in action, to his left hand.

CHAPTER VII.

REPULSE AT DOVER. — SUCCESS AT THOMPSONS STATION.

After the battle of Murfreesboro, or Stone River, fought December 31, 1862, General Bragg fell back to Shelbyville, where General Forrest reported to him in person, and was ordered to remain at Columbia, Tenn., and throw out pickets to protect the left flank of the Confederate army against the Federal forces in front. For two or three weeks little of importance was done more than to recuperate the command. Toward the last of January General Forrest was ordered by Major-General Wheeler, who had become chief of cavalry in that department, to take eight hundred men and interrupt as far as possible the navigation on Cumberland River, and he made some moves with small forces to that end. On the 26th of January, however, he was summoned to Bragg's headquarters and informed that General Wheeler had planned the capture of Fort Donelson, and was already *en route* with part of the Forrest brigade, which he must follow and command. Coming up with the expedition after two days' hard riding he found his troops scantily supplied with subsistence and ammunition, and calling upon General Wheeler caused both his own and Wharton's brigades to be inspected. The fact was revealed that both brigades were short of ammunition and cooking utensils. There were only fifteen or twenty rounds of ammuni-

tion for small arms and forty-five or fifty for the artillery.

The weather was bitterly cold, and Forrest protested that the men were not in a condition to make the attack, and that even if successful in taking the garrison of five or six hundred men, the place—one hundred miles from the base of supplies—could not be held, while the Confederate loss would necessarily be heavy. Therefore he urged the abandonment of the enterprise. However, it was too late, and he was ordered to move on Dover by way of the Cumberland Iron-works.

Dover was now the fortified place, not old Fort Donelson. Forrest's force consisted of a portion of the Fourth Tennessee, Fourth Alabama, Cox's, Napier's, and Holmes's battalions, Woodward's Kentuckians, and four guns—in all about eight hundred men. At the iron-works, nine miles from Dover, he charged and captured a company of Federal cavalry, except three or four men who escaped and gave the alarm. The entire command came in sight of Dover about 12 M. on the 3d of February. Forrest was assigned to the right, about eight hundred yards from the outer rifle-pits; Wharton's brigade was placed on the south and southwest, but the Eighth Texas was detached and sent out in the direction of Fort Henry to guard against an attack from that quarter. A demand for unconditional surrender was sent in and promptly refused. All arrangements were made to charge at half-past two o'clock, it being the thought and really the only hope that the works could be successfully carried by a rush of the whole line.

About two o'clock General Forrest observed some small detachments of Federal infantry coming toward the river, and thinking that they were abandoning the place he ordered a charge. This was a double mistake, for the movement, in fact, was only a change of posi-

tion. The Federals fled back to the main works, but Forrest and his horsemen, following at breakneck speed, found themselves facing a murderous fire from small arms and artillery, and were compelled to hastily retreat. Forrest's horse was killed under him and his men thought their leader was killed, although he was unhurt in the fall. The whole line was soon arranged for another attack on foot. This was made in splendid but reckless style, and was only partially successful; again Forrest had a horse killed under him, and in the fall he was seriously hurt. The troops secured good positions, but could not carry the works, and their losses were very heavy. Ammunition was nearly exhausted, and the firing ceased. The Federals, suspecting this, sallied out and captured twenty-five or thirty Confederates.

Wharton was more successful on his line, driving the Federals from a strong position, and capturing a 12-pounder rifle-gun and killing some forty-eight or fifty horses out of the sixty-four belonging to the battery. The garrison was driven into a small space, but held an impregnable position against troops without ammunition. The assailants held on with scant protection until the moon rose on the scene. The leaders could do nothing but withdraw. A detail was sent to the landing near the fort and burned a boat loaded with supplies; others gathered up such of the wounded as could be removed on horseback or in wagons, and brought away a lot of captured and much-needed blankets. The 12-pounder gun was also removed with a caisson full of ammunition. Federal reenforcements were coming from Fort Henry, but did not arrive in time to pursue the repulsed Confederates. The commander of the fort was Colonel A. C. Harding, of the Eighty-third Illinois Infantry, who had a force of about six hundred men and a fine battery. He handled the

troops with spirit and skill, and made an effective defense. He reported thirteen killed, fifty-one wounded, and forty-six prisoners.

Forrest lost about two hundred men in killed, wounded, and captured, or nearly one-fourth of his command. Colonel Frank McNairy of his staff was killed. Colonel W. D. Holman, of Napier's battalion, was wounded, and also three of his captains, who were captured. Wharton's command lost seventeen killed, sixty wounded, and eight mising—a total loss to the Confederates of two hundred and eighty-five. The Federal commander, Colonel W. W. Lowe, who moved over from Fort Henry, reported that he found one hundred and thirty-five Confederates dead and held fifty prisoners. The command moved slowly away soon after dark, and some gunboats coming up opened a furious though harmless fire, shelling the woods in the direction the Confederates had taken. That night in a cabin by the roadside three or four miles from Dover, Generals Wheeler, Forrest, and Wharton talked over the misfortunes of the day. Forrest was suffering from his fall, and was in a tempestuous state of mind. He said that he had advised against the movement, but obeyed orders. General Wheeler addressed him in his firm but courteous manner, and stated that he assumed the blame for any mistake made. This only aroused Forrest the more. He said: "General, you can go and tell that to the parents and wives and sisters of my brave boys who fell to-day, but I will tell you this one thing with all due respect, and you may take my sword now if you want it: I will go into my coffin before I will fight under you again, and you can put that in your report to General Bragg."

General Wheeler seemed much touched and told him that he could not and would not take the sword of so brave a man, and regretted that he had such feeling.

Captain D. E. Myers, a Kentuckian, and now (1902) a well-known lawyer of Memphis, was a quiet witness of this scene, and but recently related it at more length to the writer—and it is a fact that while Forrest and Wheeler afterward cooperated with each other on opposite flanks of the army in great engagements and were ever good friends personally, Forrest kept his word, and never again fought under orders from Wheeler. They were different types of men, of different education and ideas, each one great in his own way and sphere.

On the 4th the little army began the return to Columbia, but made a wide detour by way of Centreville, to avoid General Jeff C. Davis and other Federal commanders on different roads. On the way Major G. V. Rambaut, a favorite staff-officer with General Forrest, and Colonel Charles M. Carroll, who was acting as aide, riding ahead with a small detachment lost the way and rode into a Federal column and were captured. Rambaut was sent to join Major Strange in prison at Alton, Ill., and was exchanged with him four or five months later.

Forrest resumed his post at Columbia on the 17th of February to the left of Bragg's army, while General Wheeler, with Wharton's brigade, took a position on the right flank. In this month Russell's Fourth Alabama was detached from Forrest's brigade, and its place was taken by the Eleventh Tennessee, formed by the union of Holmes's and Douglass's battalions, while Cox's and Napier's battalions were united as the Tenth Tennessee Cavalry. The skeleton Confederate regiments were often thus consolidated, especially in the last two years of the war. While Forrest was still giving his men and horses a little rest at Columbia, Major-General Earl Van Dorn arrived from Mississippi with three brigades of cavalry, about forty-five hundred

rank and file. These were Frank C. Armstrong's, with King's battery, four guns; J. W. Whitfield's and G. B. Cosby's brigades. The Federals had strong forces at Franklin and Triune. The Confederates were thrown forward across Duck River, and some sharp skirmishing occurred for the next ten days.

Shortly after this the battle of Thompsons Station took place, in which General Forrest, surrounded as he was on his own side and confronted on the other by as brave men as ever mounted a horse, flashed a saber, or looked over gleaming carbine or cannon from either end, retrieved himself from the sting of the Dover affair. As early as the 19th of February he advised General Wheeler that a movement in reconnaissance, and in good shape and force, might be expected by the Federals coming out from Franklin. His idea was that with Van Dorn's command, his own, Roddey's, and Wharton's converging from different points, the Federal advance could be destroyed. His foresight was wonderfully clear. He seemed by intuition to know what the enemy would or should do. Hence, when Major-General Rosecrans, a methodical and sagacious commander, began to make arrangements for the spring and summer campaign, and sent a strong force down the pike toward Unionville and Duck River, Chapel and Spring Hill, it was no surprise except in results.

Van Dorn, advised by Forrest—who was always at the front—of what to expect, advanced his five brigades in all, a force of about six thousand men and twelve pieces of artillery, on the 4th of March, and took a position near Thompsons Station—some four miles in front of Spring Hill. Cosby's brigade, however, was detained at Duck River, and was not engaged in the battle that ensued. Forrest, with about two thousand men, was placed on the extreme right. General W. H. Jackson, commanding a division composed of Arm-

strong's and Whitfield's brigades and King's battery, had gone ahead of the other troops and advanced within four miles of Franklin, and at that point encountered a Federal column of nearly three thousand troops, accompanied by the Eighteenth Ohio Battery of six Rodman rifled guns. Of this force, six hundred were cavalry, all under Colonel John Coburn, of the Thirty-third Indiana Infantry. His command of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and a large train of eighty wagons made a splendid appearance on the pike, and General Jackson was content to indulge in an artillery duel for two hours. Finally, the Federal commander, although fearing that he was outnumbered, made a dash with his cavalry, and the Confederates fell back to the vicinity of Thompsons Station on the Alabama and Tennessee Railroad. Here the rest of Van Dorn's troops came up and formed in line about dark. The Federals advanced, and the two lines slept not far apart that night. Colonel Coburn was in such a position that there was nothing for him to do but fight.

General Van Dorn gave him abundant opportunity early in the morning of the 5th of March. Coburn sent back half his surplus baggage with forty of his wagons and faced the situation like a brave man. Forrest, as stated, was far over on the right with about two thousand men and Freeman's battery of six guns and was eager for a fight, for he knew he had a fighting chance. It was nearly ten o'clock before the heroic Coburn advanced within fighting range. He had good reason to be cautious. The Thirty-third and Eighty-fifth Indiana, with two guns, formed the right, and the Twenty-third Wisconsin and Nineteenth Michigan the left wing. Farther to his left dismounted cavalry occupied a thicket of cedars on the crest of a ridge, and back of that the cavalry reserve, under Colonel Thomas J. Jordan; the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Ohio

was also in reserve with the train. A general charge of all arms was made, and the artillery fire was rapid and effective. King's battery was charged by infantry, but well defended by Whitfield's brigade and Earle's Third Arkansas regiment behind a stone fence. As the Federal cavalry was repulsed Forrest threw Freeman's battery to the front, swept the advancing infantry, and drove the battery from the field. Colonel Starnes with his two regiments was detached and sent to the right, while he, with the remainder of his command, moved still farther around to the right and rear to cut off the Federal retreat toward Franklin. The Federals, forced back by Starnes, made a stubborn stand behind a stone fence, and Forrest made two charges before they surrendered and were sent to the rear.

In this affair the general again, and as usual, had a horse shot under him. Swinging around still farther he charged up a steep hillside and faced a severe fire from infantry. This was the final charge of the day, and in it Captain Montgomery Little, of the escort, fell mortally wounded by Forrest's side, and Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Buller Trezevant, of the Fifth Tennessee Cavalry, was killed. But the charge was successful. Colonel Coburn, beaten back and abandoned by many of his command, surrendered to General Forrest in person with a force of nearly fifteen hundred officers and men. With him were also surrendered Colonel Gilbert and Major W. R. Shafter, who, as commander-in-chief of the United States forces, aided by General Wheeler, led the command against the Spanish army at Santiago, Cuba, in 1898. Forrest, who always appreciated gallantry in his opponents, permitted the officers to retain their horses and side-arms.*

As soon as Colonel Coburn surrendered Forrest

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxiii, part i, p. 84.

sent a detachment after the Twenty-fourth Ohio Infantry and the wagons, but only succeeded in capturing seventy-five men, and nearly all these had been in the thick of the fight. The Ohio regiment escaped as a unit, and was afterward denounced by Colonel Coburn. The Federal cavalry lost twenty-seven men and their artillery, and had one man slightly wounded. In the final charge Forrest was on foot, and had about sixteen hundred of his men in the field. His losses were nine killed, fifty-eight wounded, and two missing—total, sixty-nine. Cosby's brigade was only partially engaged, and had only three wounded. Whitfield lost twenty-five killed, one hundred and thirty-seven wounded, and ten missing—total, one hundred and seventy-two out of fourteen hundred men on the field. Armstrong's losses were killed seventeen, wounded ninety-one—total, one hundred and eight out of nearly one thousand men in action. Both these brigades were heavily engaged, and at one time Armstrong's entire brigade was thrown to the left to the relief of Whitfield, who was being pressed, and together they charged as infantry, and drove the Federals from a strong position.

It was while this heavy fighting was going on that Forrest swung around to the rear, and by the last grand charge of the day made certain the capture of four regiments, numbering, officers and men, thirteen hundred. The Federal losses appeared to be eighty-eight killed and two hundred and six wounded—total, two hundred and ninety-four. Total loss—killed, wounded, and captured—nearly sixteen hundred out of two thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, according to Colonel Coburn's report. A Confederate correspondent, who was on the field and reported the battle next day, claimed that twenty-two hundred prisoners were taken, which is probably more nearly correct. Reports of

such events are liable to be conflicting even when made officially. The Confederates had to mourn the loss of some good men and officers. Colonel Samuel G. Earle, of the Third Arkansas Cavalry, was killed leading a charge; also Captain Alfred Dysart, of the Fourth Tennessee, and Captain William Watson, of General Armstrong's staff. Rev. Stephen D. Crouch, of Jackson's brigade, was among the slain, and Lieutenant John Johnson, of the Ninth Tennessee, was killed while carrying the flag of the regiment. These and other losses were keenly felt even in the hour of victory.

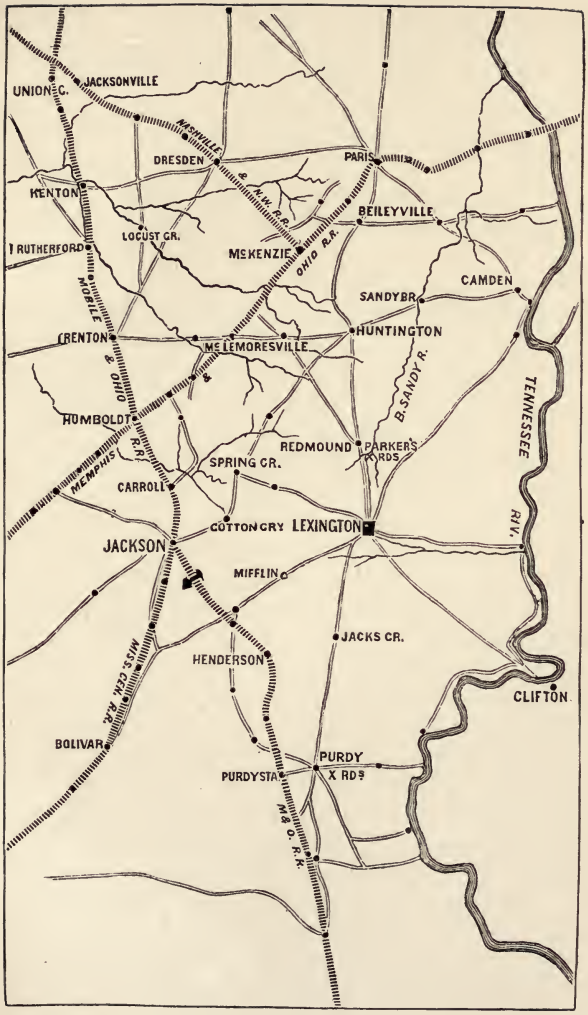
General Van Dorn, with the prisoners and property captured, withdrew on the 5th to Spring Hill, leaving a line of pickets near Franklin, and soon after fell back to Columbia. Forrest was sent north of Duck River on the 11th with two brigades to hold in check a force of cavalry and infantry reported to be advancing under General Phil Sheridan, and was ordered to cover the withdrawal of troops on picket duty near Thompsons Station. The river was very high, and the crossing accomplished with difficulty after some sharp skirmishing. On the 15th Forrest again occupied Spring Hill, and on the 25th, with a limited force, captured Brentwood with five hundred and twenty-one men and officers of the Twenty-second Wisconsin, under command of Colonel Bloodgood, taking stores, tents, etc.; and also captured and destroyed the Harpeth Bridge and stockade with two hundred and fifty officers and men of the Twenty-second Michigan Infantry. Forrest had with him only his escort of sixty, the Fourth Mississippi, Tenth and Sixth Tennessee regiments, and two guns, all told about one thousand men.

On the return the Second Michigan Cavalry dashed into the rear of the Tenth Tennessee, which stampeded, and was soon in front of the column, losing one killed,

three wounded, and nineteen captured. Forrest was near the front, and after a desperate effort succeeded in checking his panic-stricken troopers, but not until the Michiganders had recaptured several of the wagons loaded with stores. Forrest and Starnes retook some of these wagons, drove back the Federals some distance, and then continued their march to the rear without losing a prisoner. The Confederate loss was one officer and three men killed, thirteen men wounded, and thirty-nine missing. The Federal loss was four killed, nineteen wounded, and four missing in the cavalry, and seven hundred and fifty men and officers taken at Brentwood and at Harpeth Bridge.

General Bragg on March 31st announced to the army the engagements at Thompsons Station and Brentwood in most complimentary terms, stating that twelve hundred and twenty-one prisoners, including seventy-three commissioned officers, were taken at the former place, and seven hundred and fifty men and thirty-five officers at the latter, and especially mentioned Major-General Van Dorn and Brigadier-General Forrest, saying that: "The skilful manner in which these generals achieved such success exhibits clearly the judgment, discipline, and good conduct of the brave troops of their command," etc., a compliment from General Bragg, the rugged martinet, which must have been greatly enjoyed by the more rugged volunteer General Forrest. Van Dorn was a West-Pointer, an experienced and accomplished officer of the regular army, and was in line for further promotion and honors, although he was sensitive on account of the praise accorded Forrest by the Southern press and people at large. This latter fact brought about some feeling between the two generals.

Some writer in the Chattanooga Rebel gave Forrest credit for the success at Thompsons Station and



Map of the campaign of the early part of 1863.

Brentwood, and Van Dorn, in a personal interview, attributed the authorship to a member of Forrest's staff. General Forrest denied any knowledge of the matter in his usual vigorous style of expression, and Van Dorn accepted the statement with all the dignity and courtesy of the chevalier that he was. Forrest offered his hand, saying, "We have enough to do fighting the enemies of our country without fighting each other."

Forrest continued in command of scouting parties and on outpost duties until about April 9th. General Van Dorn, on the 10th, sent two divisions under Generals W. H. Jackson and Forrest, thirty-one hundred strong, besides Freeman's battery, apparently to attack Franklin, commanded by General Gordon Granger, an old-time fighter of the regular army. This was perhaps a mere diversion in favor of Bragg's right wing at Tullahoma. Granger was strongly fortified, and had twice the force of Van Dorn. Besides that, Stanley straggled in, so to speak, unexpectedly with his brigade of sixteen hundred, having disobeyed instructions and come in conflict with Starnes's brigade and Freeman's battery some two miles in the rear of Armstrong. The battery was taken by surprise in the flank, and Captain Freeman was captured with his guns and thirty-six men, the flanks having been left unguarded. Colonel Starnes came to the rescue and recaptured the guns, but in the rush to get the prisoners away a member of the Fourth Regular Cavalry shot Captain Freeman dead because he was so exhausted as to slacken his gait. This incident produced a painful and shocking impression among the Confederates. General Forrest was stricken with grief, and some of his men carried a feeling of deadly resentment to the end of the war. Captain Freeman was greatly esteemed and beloved as an officer and a Christian gentleman. Forrest and

Lieutenant Douglass joined in an assault upon Stanley's troopers, driving them across the Harpeth River, and at dark the command returned to Spring Hill.

In this fight Stanley lost six killed, nineteen wounded, and seventeen missing and prisoners; total forty-two. Armstrong's brigade (Confederate), one killed, eleven wounded, two missing; Starnes's, three killed, sixteen wounded, and two missing; Forrest's escort, four wounded; Freeman's battery, one killed, one wounded, and twenty-nine prisoners; total, seventy. The Confederate cavalry now enjoyed a brief respite, only to enter upon more active service.

CHAPTER VIII.

STREIGHT'S EXPEDITION OVERTAKEN AND CAPTURED.

In the early part of the war such cavalry leaders as Forrest and Wheeler, John Morgan, Mosby, and J. E. B. Stuart, and their men, fighting mostly upon their own ground, seemed to have the advantage in horsemanship, in alertness, dash, and in the use of sabers, shotguns, and pistols. But as they began to wear out and exhaust their resources, and possibly some of their earlier enthusiasm, they realized that their opponents were possessed not only of courage, but training, method, and great powers of endurance. Sheridan and Wilder and Wilson and Kilpatrick became famous as hard riders and fighters, and there were hundreds of others on the Union side not less worthy of mention. Among those who sought and made a place in history, even though he went down in defeat, was Colonel Abel D. Streight, of Indiana. It became known that General Rosecrans was anxious to find a leader who would undertake to cut the railroad lines of the Confederacy, and destroy bridges, arsenals, foundries, and other Government works in Bragg's rear, and thus strike a blow at his base of supplies. Colonel Streight presented himself with a well-defined plan which was at once accepted. He was a courageous, stalwart man, and proposed to carry the war into the heart of the Confederacy. Bragg had fallen back to Tullahoma, where his army spent part of

the winter of 1865, and was not able to take the aggressive. Chattanooga was a strategic point—the gateway to the Southern country. Colonel Streight's idea of making a raid was somewhat after Forrest's methods. Rome, Ga., only a few miles from Kingston, on the Western and Atlantic Railroad, a trunk line connecting Atlanta with Chattanooga and with the railroad system on to Knoxville and Virginia, was selected as the objective point. Rome was connected with Kingston by a branch line and was the seat of important works.

Colonel Streight was allowed to select his force, to be mounted on mules, take his own way, and start at will. This seemed a brilliant scheme and opportunity for the gallant colonel. He chose as his command his own regiment, the Fifty-first Indiana; the Seventy-third Indiana, Colonel Gilbert Hathaway; the Third Ohio, Colonel Orris A. Lawson; the Eighth Illinois, Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew F. Rodgers, all infantry; and two companies of Union Alabama cavalry under Captain D. D. Smith. The entire force, officers and men, was about two thousand strong. The Alabamians were from a part of the country to be invaded, and were useful as guides. This command left Nashville on eight small steamers on the 10th of April, dropped down the Cumberland River to Palmyra, and from there marched across to Fort Henry on the Tennessee River, and, not being entirely supplied with mules, gathered up such others as could be found on the way. On the 17th, the command was reembarked on the boats which had been sent around through the Ohio and up the Tennessee rivers. Two gunboats, with a brigade of marines under General Ellett, were added as an escort to the transports, and on the 19th this formidable expedition reached Eastport, Miss. Colonel Streight reported at Bear Creek, twelve miles distant,

to General Grenville M. Dodge, who was in command of the infantry and cavalry, eight thousand strong,* and had instructions to facilitate the proposed movement by every available means.

Dodge had already skirmished sharply with General P. D. Roddey's small brigade of cavalry, and telegraphed to Corinth for Fulton's brigade, two thousand strong, and another battery, thus increasing his force to some ten thousand men. He was to keep up a bold front, and Streight started across the country without delay. The movement had been conducted as secretly as possible and at greater speed than scouts or spies could travel. It was unfortunate for Colonel Streight that he had decided to use mules instead of horses for his mounted infantry. The first night at Eastport these animals gave vent to a chorus of brays that startled the country for miles around. Some of Roddey's men slipped into the corral and stampeded about four hundred of them, and Colonel Streight, in his report, says it took two days to recover two hundred, and more time at Tuscumbia to supply the place of the others. This caused a serious delay, and gave Forrest time to reach the neighborhood. So if it is true that ancient Rome was once saved by the cackling of geese, it can be as well authenticated that a modern Rome was saved by the braying of mules.

Colonel Streight moved out of Eastport, April 1st, and joining General Dodge in a movement against Tuscumbia brought up the rear. General Roddey was out on the front offering a stubborn resistance, and it took two or three days to reach the place. There the raiding command was carefully inspected, and men not fit for the expedition were left behind. This reduced Streight's force, as he states, to about fifteen

* Rebellion Records, series i, vol. xxiii, p. 286.

hundred effective men, but they had nearly all seen hard service and were splendidly armed and equipped.

Meantime Forrest had been ordered by General Bragg to make a forced march from Spring Hill, Tenn., to Decatur, Ala., to aid Roddey in checking the Federal advance, for the real nature of the movement was not then known to the Confederates or even suspected. It might be a reconnaissance in force or with the more serious design of forcing Bragg back on or beyond Chattanooga, as was eventually effected. Forrest disposed of his forces to advantage: Edmondson's Eleventh Tennessee was ordered to cross the Tennessee River at Bainbridge, a few miles above Florence, and Forrest, with the Fourth, Ninth, and Tenth Tennessee, and Morton's battery crossed at Browns Ferry, on the 26th, near Courtland, but left Dibbrell with the Eighth Tennessee and one gun on the north side to patrol the river in the direction of Florence, and thus create, if possible, a diversion. Forrest and Roddey fought and fell back across Town Creek. On the 27th Dodge learned that Forrest was in his front, succeeded in crossing the creek, and the Confederates retired toward Courtland. Streight was already well under way on the road to Rome. Under cover of all this fighting, which had no other object, he quietly left Tuscumbia on the night of the 26th. Rain was pouring down, the roads were muddy, and progress was made slowly, but everything was favorable to a quiet start. By ten o'clock next morning, the 27th, the command fed at Russellville, eighteen miles from Tuscumbia, and at sunset went into camp at Mount Hope, thirty-eight miles from the starting-point. Here a message was received from Dodge giving assurance that he had Forrest on the run, and directing Streight to push on, which he did, reaching the village of Moulton on the afternoon of the 28th.

No enemy had been met or heard of. Next morning the lightning brigade resumed its march, taking the road east toward Blountville.

It was not until the evening of the 28th that Forrest received a report through a citizen from Tuscumbia that a body of mounted Union troops, some two thousand strong, had passed through Mount Hope in the direction of Moulton. He saw through it all in an instant, and formed his plans accordingly. Certain troops were ordered to occupy the attention of General Dodge and at least prevent pursuit; Dibbrell was directed through a courier to attack Dodge's outposts at Florence, use his artillery freely, and make as great display of force as possible; Roddey was to take his Alabama regiment, Edmondson's Eleventh Tennessee, and Julian's battalion, throw these troops between Dodge and Streight, and follow the raiders. The assignments were quickly made, and Forrest himself looked after the details. Like Colonel Streight he picked his men and artillery, saw that the horses were shod and ammunition properly distributed. Three days' rations were cooked for the men, and two days' rations of corn issued for the horses. Forrest selected as his immediate command Starnes's and Biffle's regiments, two pieces of John W. Morton's battery, and Ferrell's battery of six pieces which had been with General Roddey.

At one o'clock on the morning of the 29th, Forrest moved out of Courtland, about the same hour that Streight was making his start for the day. The Confederate leader and his men rode along doggedly through the rain and mud until eight o'clock, when an hour was taken to feed and rest. Moulton was reached by noon, and then another hour was given to take off saddles and feed. Forrest knew by this time that Streight had about fifteen hundred men, most of them

well trained and as hard fighters as the West ever produced. His own command was only twelve hundred strong, but composed of veterans who had been with him in many battles and would follow him into the jaws of death. The ride was resumed early in the afternoon at a brisk gait, and by midnight the advance was within four miles of Days Gap, a notch in Sand Mountain reached from the valley below by a narrow, stony, winding road. There the men in the lead were allowed to lie down and were soon asleep, and by daylight the column had closed up. Captain William Forrest and his scouts, however, advanced cautiously and captured a vidette without giving an alarm. Streight's camp-fires were located, but nothing was done that night. At dawn on the 30th he was on the move with his command well up the mountain. The rear-guard had not left the fires when the boom of a cannon gave notice that an enemy was in pursuit. The column filed up the zigzag road, and Captain Forrest was close behind with his yelling troopers.

General Forrest was on the move as early as Streight, and ordered Biffle's and Starnes's regiments to make a flank movement through another pass. Colonel Streight anticipated this, and hurried on to a point where he could make a stand at a well-chosen place three miles from the Gap. He was closely pursued by Forrest's scouts, and the advance of Edmondson's and Roddey's regiments and Julian's battalion. The mountain plateau is quite broken and well adapted to defensive purposes. Streight selected a strong position on a ridge circling to the rear and not easily flanked, as on the right there was a precipitous ravine and on the left an almost impassable marsh. The command was formed in ambuscade with two 12-pound howitzers in the center, but concealed. Presently Captain Forrest drove in Captain Smith's rear-guard,

and when once within the trap a whole line rose up and delivered a volley at short range. Captain Forrest fell with a crushed thigh-bone from a Minie ball, and many of his men and horses were killed and wounded before the others could be withdrawn. Forrest had only about one thousand men on the mountain after the long ride from Courtland, the forced march from Spring Hill, and subsequent fighting which weakened his force.

Those who reached the bivouac late the night before were still resting themselves or grooming their horses at the foot of the mountain. Two of Morton's guns came up, and four from Ferrell's battery, and opened fire on the Federal position, though not effectively. Edmondson's men were dismounted and thrown into line; Roddey and Julian, mounted, were deployed to the right, while Forrest's escort and the scouts were placed on the left. The movement was made precipitately and not in concert. Edmondson advanced within a hundred yards of the Federal line; Roddey and Julian recklessly rode ahead of Edmondson's regiment, and in an instant nearly the whole line was exposed to a murderous fire and was soon driven back in confusion, except that Edmondson and the scouts fell back in fairly good order. Colonel Streight took advantage of the movement and advanced on a charge which was quite effective.

The Confederates were driven back over their own guns, and obliged to leave two of them with caissons and ammunition. Some of the horses were killed and others hopelessly entangled in chains, harness, and bushes. This ended the fight for the day at that place. It began at six and ceased at eleven o'clock. The losses were considerable on both sides. Forrest claimed to have found fifty or seventy-five Federal dead and wounded on the field; while Streight in his

report claims to have taken about forty prisoners and found a large number of wounded and about thirty Confederate dead on the field. The Federals lost Lieutenant-Colonel Sheets, Fifty-first Indiana, mortally wounded, and Lieutenant Pavey, Eighteenth Illinois, of Colonel Streight's staff, seriously wounded. In a field hospital were found about seventy-five of the Federal dead and wounded, and thirty Confederates.

Forrest was enraged at the loss of his two guns from Ferrell's battery, and never forgave the young lieutenant in charge. He made the air blue with his "remarks," and bewailed the absence of Starnes's and Biffle's regiments, but they were off on a flank movement and not within call. Summoning all his energy and drawing his saber he ordered every man to dismount and hitch his horse to a sapling—there were to be no horse-holders. Those guns had to be retaken or all perish in the attempt; without the guns they would have no more use for horses. Soon after eleven o'clock he moved forward to attack the same position, and was surprised to find only a small rear-guard, which fired a few shots and then fled on mule-back. The main command had taken the road to Blountsville, carrying the two captured pieces. It took the Confederates nearly an hour to go back, unhitch their horses from the saplings, and form in column ready to resume the march.

The policy of these two bold spirits was now well defined. Streight was resolved to keep his command well in hand and ride on to some point where he could burn railroad bridges and destroy Confederate Government property. Forrest's was to run him down day and night, and his orders were to shoot at anything blue, and keep up the scare. His only dread was that Streight might switch off and make a detour back to the Tennessee River. Riding on rapidly Forrest was

delighted to see Biffle's and Starnes's regiments (the latter commanded by Major McLemore in the absence of Colonel Starnes, caused by illness) coming in on the left from their long ride around Days Gap. Colonel Roddey could now be spared. His regiment and Julian's battalion were ordered to return to the front of General Dodge, and Edmondson's regiment, the Eleventh Tennessee, accompanied by Major C. W. Anderson of the staff, was ordered to march on the left toward Somerville and keep in a line parallel with Streight to prevent an escape in that direction. Forrest retained for the rest of this running fight only his escort and Forrest's scouts and Biffle's and Starnes's regiments. This selection, with a larger force at his command, showed how certain he was of winning the fight.

The advance of the Fourth Tennessee overtook Streight's rear-guard at Crooked Creek, about ten miles south of Days Gap, in the afternoon, and sharp skirmishing began at once. Colonel Streight said in his report: "The enemy pressed our rear so hard that I was compelled to prepare for battle. I selected a strong position about one mile south of the crossing of the creek on a ridge called Hog Mountain. The whole force soon became engaged. About an hour before dark the enemy charged right and left, but with the help of the two pieces of artillery captured in the morning, and the two mountain howitzers, we were able to repulse them. . . . About 10 P. M. the enemy were driven from our front, leaving a large number of dead and wounded on the field . . . and as soon as possible we moved out. The ammunition which we had captured with the two guns was exhausted, and being very short of horses I ordered the guns spiked and the carriages destroyed. . . . We had but fairly got under way when I received informa-

tion of the enemy's advance. In one of these thickets I placed the Seventy-third Indiana. The enemy approached. The head of the column passed without discovering our position. The whole regiment opened a destructive fire, causing a complete stampede of the enemy. . . . We were not again disturbed until we had marched several miles, when they attacked our rear-guard vigorously. I again succeeded in ambuscading them, which caused them to give up the position for the night. We reached Blountsville, forty miles from Days Gap, about ten o'clock in the morning. Many of our mules had given out, leaving their riders on foot, but there was very little straggling behind the rear-guard."

The losses of the Federals were greater than those of the Confederates in that evening fight. The latter lost only a few killed and wounded, but claimed to find some fifty Federals killed or wounded on the field; also captured some thirty wagons and teams scattered through the woods. The lines were very close together. General Forrest was seen everywhere moving among his men. He escaped unhurt, but had one horse killed and two wounded under him. An attack on Colonel Streight's horse-holders in the rear and a charge in front at the same time, decided him as to the time to move on. It was as gallant and stubborn a fight on both sides there in that far-off mountain desert as ever was made by American soldiers, and reflected the highest credit upon officers and men. The subsequent fights that night produced no decisive results. The last one was at two o'clock in the morning, which gives an idea of the persistency of the pursuit. It was three o'clock on the morning of May 1st that Forrest's troops were permitted to lie down for a two hours' rest, after forty-eight hours' riding, which included nearly eighteen hours' fighting.

Meantime, as they slept, Streight's mounted infantry descended the eastern side of the mountain into a valley of comparative plenty, reaching Blountsville at ten o'clock, where corn was found for the mules and something for the men as well. It was May-day, and the village was full of country people who, without intending to do so, contributed a large number of fresh horses and mules to the unexpected raiders. Ammunition and rations were hastily distributed to the men. It was decided to get along with pack-mules; the wagons were bunched and set on fire, and the command moved on toward Gadsden. Just then Forrest's advance came upon the scene, accelerated the departure of Captain Smith's rear-guard, extinguished the fires of the burning wagons, and secured a supply of food for the hungry men. But there was not much to pick up in the way of horses and mules, for Streight's men swept the country as far as they could reach on each side of the road. The course of flight and pursuit was almost east. Brisk skirmishing was kept up in a running way until Streight's band reached the east branch of the Black Warrior, some ten miles out from Blountsville. The ford was rocky, and the crossing was only accomplished after some fighting and the use of both skirmishers and the howitzers on the east bank protected the entire force until it was safely across the little river. Nothing was lost there except two pack-mules drowned. These were loaded with hardtack, which some of Forrest's men rescued before it had time to get soft.

After a brief rest at this point Streight rode on as rapidly as possible; Forrest followed with his escort in the lead. This was the fourth night's consecutive march. Early on the morning of the 2d the Confederate general, with some fifty picked men besides his escort, came up with the Federal rear-guard, and a

sharp conflict was kept up for a distance of fifteen miles to Black Creek. This is a sluggish stream with very high banks, and at this point on the road from Blountsville to Gadsden, in 1863, it was spanned by an uncovered wooden bridge over which Colonel Streight rushed his entire force except one man, set the bridge on fire, and faced about with his howitzers. Forrest himself captured the vidette after chasing him at breakneck speed.

Now it would seem that Forrest was baffled at last, and that his wily foe might take a well-earned rest and ride on to Rome by easier stages. The stream was not regarded as fordable, and the nearest bridge, two miles away, was dilapidated and unused. At this crisis, while the Confederate commander was in a quandary and waiting for his artillery and the rest of his command to close up, a plain, womanly, country girl, Emma Sanson, appeared upon the scene, and by her tact and quickness of judgment did much to change the fortunes of the day and the campaign. But for her Streight might have taken Rome. Near by this bridge was a little country one-story home of four rooms, with wide halls and porches, where lived the widow Sanson and two young daughters. One son and brother was in the Nineteenth Alabama Infantry, and another in a Georgia regiment, and these worthy ladies, like so many others in the South, were struggling along as best they could. Recognizing Forrest as a Confederate officer, the girl came out from the house, answered all his questions intelligently, and added that there was an old ford near by her mother's farm where she had seen cows cross in very low water, and if she had a horse and her saddle put on it she would go and show him the place.

"No time for that; get up behind me," he said, which she did instantly. Just then the mother came

out, and excitedly inquired where she was going. General Forrest explained politely, and ordering a courier to follow, was off with the modern Maid of Saragossa at his back. The ford was not very far away. The general and his fair guide dismounted, and he crawled down a ravine to the water, the girl, however, following him closely. He quickly satisfied himself that his men could use the cow crossing. On the return they were both under fire, as the Confederates were sharply engaged with the Federal rear-guard across the chasm which had been spanned by the burned bridge. Forrest brought his brave young charge back to her mother, and was profuse in his thanks. He was a man of tender and sentimental moods, and remained to talk to the ladies as long as he dared take time. He gave Miss Emma a horse, asked her to send him a lock of her hair, and also wrote her a note of thanks, written in pencil, on the leaf of a note-book. This is yet in existence.

The old ford, or Lost Ford, was speedily made available. The cavalry carried over by hand the ammunition from the caissons; the guns and empty caissons were pulled across by ropes, and soon all was in readiness for a rapid march. The advance-guard dropped in unexpectedly at Gadsden, four miles distant, and hastened Colonel Streight's departure, or at least stopped the destruction of some small commissary stores in the place. In his report he says: "The enemy followed closely and kept up a continuous skirmish with the rear of the column until 4 P. M., at which time we reached Blount's plantation, fifteen miles from Gadsden. Here I decided to halt. The command was dismounted, a detail made to feed the horses and mules while the remainder of the command formed in line of battle. Meantime the rear-guard became seriously engaged and was driven in. The enemy at once at-

tacked our main line, but was repulsed, fell back to a ridge where he massed his force as if for a more determined attack. It was becoming dark, and I decided to withdraw unobserved, if possible, and conceal my command in a thicket a half mile in our rear, there to be in ambush and await his advance. In the meantime I had ordered Captain Milton Russell, Fifty-first Indiana, to take two hundred of the best-mounted men selected from the whole command, and proceed to Rome and hold the bridge until the command could come up." The colonel also mentions with deep regret the loss of the gallant Colonel Hathaway, of the Seventy-third Indiana, who fell mortally wounded in the engagement at Blount's plantation.

The last ambuscade was a failure. It was set once too often. Forrest suspected it, made a flank movement, and the bold raiders were compelled to resume the march in the direction of Center. The idea of sending Captain Russell and two hundred men ahead to hold the bridge at Rome was well conceived, although it proved disastrous. General Forrest, at Gadsden, had sent a trusted courier, John H. Wisdom, by a slightly circuitous route to Rome to notify the people of the coming invasion; hence Russell found the bridge well defended and had to turn back on the 3d to share the common calamity of the expedition. Russell crossed the Chattooga River on a boat which the citizens soon afterward moored out of sight. Streight pressed on warily, and reaching this ferry could not find the boat, and turned up the river several miles to a bridge which was passed over and burned. At sunrise he passed Cedar Bluff, twenty-eight miles from Gadsden; at nine o'clock that day he stopped to feed, and the men fell down dead asleep at once. A message came from Captain Russell that he could not take the bridge at Rome. Then again came the report of a flanking

force nearer Rome than he was. All this in the presence of his worn-down men and animals, with the prospect of that ubiquitous dare-devil Forrest flaring up with artillery in the advance at any moment, made the situation appalling. Yet he was ready and willing to do and dare whatever man could do in such a dire crisis. Rome as a captured city began to seem a long way off.

After the fight at Blount's plantation and the breaking up of the ambuscade, Forrest, feeling sure of the game, called off for the night, and gave his men nearly ten hours' rest. Meantime the few stragglers came up in time to share this. The command present was not more than five hundred strong, officers and men, illustrating the survival of the fittest as to powers of endurance and fighting qualities. At an early hour they were in motion, comparatively fresh and ready for the fray. Reaching the place where Streight burned the last bridge near Gaylesville, the ammunition was carried over and the cannons and caissons pulled across as at Black Warrior, and none of the ammunition got wet, as complained of by Colonel Streight in his report. Forrest looked after such matters for himself.

Little time was lost in passing this bridge of ashes. Streight's men had marched all night; Forrest's slept, and then covered the same ground in a few hours. About half-past nine o'clock the Federals were found at breakfast, which was quickly left at the sound of cannon and small arms. The Confederates came up, skirmished slightly, and took some horses and mules and other spoils. Colonel Streight rallied his men on a ridge in a field; Forrest threw McLemore's regiment to the left, Biffle's to the right, and made a show of charging with his escort and a detachment from a skirt of timber in the center. Skirmishing began, but Streight's men, as he says in his report, were so ex-

hausted that they fell down in line of battle, and while looking over their gun-barrels, with fingers on the triggers, many of them went to sleep.

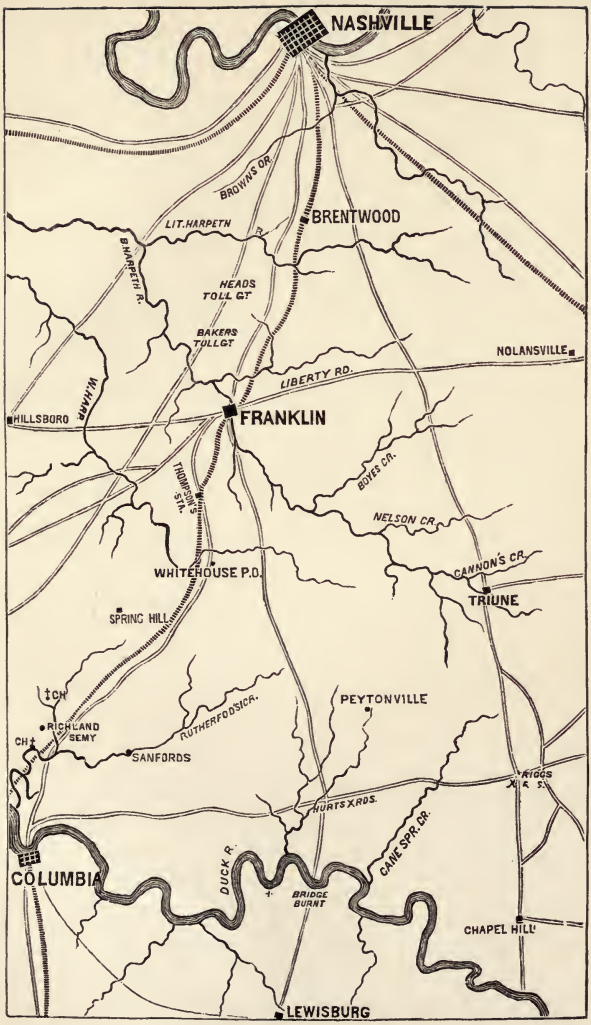
At this opportune juncture Forrest sent in Captain Henry Pointer of his staff with a flag of truce to demand a surrender of the Union commander and his men, with his favorite expression, "To avoid the further effusion of blood." Colonel Streight desired a personal interview, which was granted. Forrest's terms were: "Immediate surrender. Your men to be treated as prisoners of war; officers to retain their side-arms and personal property." During the conversation Colonel Streight asked, "How many men have you?"

"I have men enough right here to run over you and a column of fresh troops nearer Rome than you are."

Just then a section of Forrest's artillery came in sight about three hundred yards off, at which the colonel showed a little impatience. General Forrest quietly said to an officer that the artillery must not come any nearer. The section, however, kept around the crest of a hill, so as to appear like many small batteries going into position. "How much artillery have you, general?" asked the colonel.

"Enough to blow you to pieces in thirty minutes," was the reply, all of which was pure audacity.

Colonel Streight dreaded the idea of surrendering to an inferior force, and even claimed afterward that he was outnumbered three to one, and so he was, if he believed Forrest. He must see his officers, he said. "All right; it will soon be over, one way or the other," answered Forrest, indifferently. His officers were unanimously in favor of surrendering, and the colonel agreed to this in a perfunctory manner. It had been his fight all the way through, but this was not his surrender.



Map of the vicinity of Nashville.

The men stacked arms and were marched back in a field, and as soon as possible Forrest managed to get his force between them and their guns. Colonel Streight made a short address to his men, thanking them for their gallantry and calling upon them to give three cheers for the Union, which were given with a burst of enthusiasm. General Forrest was present, but made no objection to this as he respected brave men wherever found, and had gained a great victory over these. The officers were started directly to Rome, twenty miles distant. On the way they met the gallant Captain Russell, who, with tears in his eyes, surrendered his two hundred brave men. The captured men bivouacked on the ground that night and were marched into Rome the next day. Colonel Biffle's regiment gathered up the arms, and thus closed one of the most remarkable and desperately contested undertakings of the war.

On Monday, May 4th, the main body of prisoners was started by rail by way of Atlanta for Richmond. Colonel Streight and his officers were forwarded by a different train, and it is interesting as a matter of history here to mention the fact out of its order that he and four of his officers escaped from Libby Prison by the tunnel route on a dark night in February, 1864. He reentered the service, and his report of his expedition was dated Chattanooga, Tenn., August 22, 1864, although it was not transmitted to headquarters until the 10th of December, 1864. In this he assigns the poor mules as one great cause of his defeat, and says that if General Dodge had detained Forrest only one day longer, he would have been successful. He claims to have started in with only fifteen hundred men, and estimates his losses as fifteen officers and about one hundred and thirty men killed and wounded; prisoners lost, two hundred and fifty; total, three hundred

and forty-five.* This would leave eleven hundred and fifty-five officers and men surrendered to a force of less than six hundred. General R. J. Oglesby in his report says: "One of Dodge's men, who was with Streight and escaped, says that when they were taken they were worn out, and Forrest captured them with five hundred men. Streight thought a large force was after him."

General Bragg reported to Richmond: "May 3d, between Gadsden and Rome, after five days and nights of fighting and marching, General Forrest captured Colonel Streight and his whole command, about sixteen hundred men, with rifles, horses, etc.," and the Confederate Congress promptly passed a vote of thanks to General N. B. Forrest and the officers and men of his command. Forrest and his men were received in Rome with demonstrations of great joy, especially by refugees from Tennessee. He was the hero and idol of the hour, and all Georgia seemed ready to rise up and do him honor. As a testimonial the citizens presented him with a superb horse and proposed to give him a public entertainment. But he did not pause to rest upon his laurels. Two days were spent in selecting and shoeing the best of his own and the captured horses. Some of the latter, however, were afterward claimed by citizens along the line of Streight's march and restored to them. By the morning of the 6th, he had remounted his men and supplied his artillery. That afternoon a public entertainment was to have been given, but a rumor came that a heavy Federal raid was moving from Tuscumbia toward Talledega, and it was indefinitely postponed, as Forrest moved at eight o'clock that morning toward Gadsden.

There he learned that the rumor was groundless.

* Rebellion Records, vol. xviii, p. 285.

Marching directly by the shortest route, he reached Decatur on the 10th, and recrossed to the north bank of the Tennessee. Turning over the command to Colonel Biffle on the 11th, General Forrest proceeded by rail to report to General Bragg at Shelbyville. On the way he was given an enthusiastic greeting and presented with another fine horse by the people of Huntsville. Reaching Shelbyville on the 13th, General Bragg gave him a reception of unusual warmth, and proposed to have him made a major-general and to place him in chief command of the cavalry of the army. Forrest modestly demurred to this, and suggested the name of another officer for the promotion. After remaining some days at headquarters he received orders to return to Spring Hill and assume command of the cavalry on the flank, as General Van Dorn had been killed during his absence. Upon reaching there on the 16th he at once assumed command.

CHAPTER IX.

SPRING HILL TO CHICKAMAUGA.

When Forrest assumed command at Spring Hill the forces under him were Brigadier-General Jackson's division, composed of Cosby's and Whitfield's brigades, and to this was soon added his own brigade commanded by Colonel Starnes. Soon afterward, however, Jackson's division was ordered back to Mississippi. The remaining brigades, Starnes's and Armstrong's, were on picket and scout duty until about the last of June. Reconnaissances in force were made, and numerous sharp little encounters ensued. In one of these daring advances, however, General Forrest narrowly escaped with his life by mistaking a signal flag for a flag of truce.

On the 4th of June he advanced with his two brigades on Franklin to ascertain what force was there. The pickets were driven in, some captures made, and Forrest charged into the town. Colonel J. P. Baird, of the Eighty-fifth Indiana, and his soldiers took refuge in a strong little fort on a hill near by. There he began to signal vigorously to General Gordon Granger at Triune, fifteen miles to the east. Forrest mistook this to be a flag of truce, and ordering his men to cease firing, sent one forward himself and rode toward the front. Before he had attracted official attention, a Federal officer rose up from behind a hedge and shouted, " General Forrest, I know you, and don't want to see you hurt! Go back! That's no flag of truce up

there!" Forrest saluted and rode off. Looking back he saw that a detachment had arisen at short range, and he again saluted. He supposed that probably the officer was one of the number he had captured at Murfreesboro, all of whom he had treated kindly. Getting back into town, and moving up the artillery, he held the place several hours, opened the jail and released some Confederate prisoners, and had his men help themselves freely to Government and sutler's stores. Armstrong had crossed the Harpeth with Woodward's battalion and part of the First Tennessee to reconnoiter eastward in the direction of Triune, and soon met four regiments of cavalry coming from that direction, and fighting stubbornly, was forced back across the river, losing eighteen killed or wounded out of thirty-eight in his escort. He was protected, however, in crossing by Colonel Hobson's regiment of Arkansans. Forrest heard the firing and advanced with a part of his force to the scene, but being certain that a heavy force was in front withdrew with Starnes's brigade and encamped for the night within three miles of Franklin. Armstrong with his brigade resumed the picket line.

Some days later Starnes's brigade was detached and sent forward to Triune. After driving in and capturing some pickets he swung around toward Nashville, and returning burned the bridge at Brentwood which had been rebuilt since the affair of the previous April. On the 20th, Forrest made another demon-

stration on Triune with nearly his entire division. Crossing the Harpeth he encountered and drove in a regiment of Federal cavalry, and bringing up Morton's artillery to within four hundred yards of the main encampment opened fire. The Federal force then went into the rifle-pits, and several batteries returned with a heavy shelling. An infantry brigade moved into position to enfilade Forrest, and realizing that he had gone far enough he quickly withdrew. The Federal cavalry pursued and some skirmishing ensued. Major Jeffrey Forrest succeeded in bringing out on this occasion several hundred head of horses and mules and half as many fat cattle found guarded in a pasture.

The Federal cavalry had by this time become quite formidable, whatever it may have been in the early days of the war, for General Rosecrans, as early as May 10, 1863, wrote to the Federal quartermaster-general that he had on hand cavalry horses six thousand five hundred and thirty-seven, mounted infantry one thousand nine hundred and thirty-eight, also orderlies and escorts two thousand and twenty-eight. Allowing twenty-five per cent off for disabled horses he would still have had about seven thousand eight hundred and seventy-five available for service. Hence from that time on he doubtless had more cavalry than Bragg.

During the period that Forrest assumed command at Spring Hill, and began to follow Bragg out of Middle Tennessee, an unfortunate incident occurred which seemed to sustain the idea that he bore a charmed life and was impervious to danger. It has been mentioned already that he was greatly incensed at the loss of the two guns in the battle of Days Gap during Streight's raid. When the artillery was reorganized young Lieutenant Gould, of Nashville, who had been in charge of this section, was placed in another command. No charges had been made, but the lieutenant construed

his transfer as an imputation upon his courage and honor, and undertook to redress his grievance by making it a personal affair.

One day when Forrest was dining at the house of a friend in Columbia, the lieutenant called and asked for an interview, but was told that the general would see him at the quartermaster's office at three o'clock. He was there ahead of time and busily engaged in talking when the lieutenant arrived. Forrest happened to have a closed pocket-knife in his hand and walked out into the hall with the young man, not suspecting any hostile feeling much less an attack upon his life. The lieutenant at once began to speak in a nervous, excited manner about being left out of the battery. Forrest said that he did not care to discuss the matter but that his decision was final. The lieutenant suddenly fired a pistol through the pocket of a linen duster. A large ball struck the general just above the left hip, and passed through and around his body. Forrest grasped his assailant's right hand with his own, while with his left he pressed his pocket-knife to his mouth, opened it with his teeth and fingers, and gave the lieutenant a terrible slash, cutting two ribs apart, which proved to be a mortal wound. The young man ran away, and Forrest went to a surgeon, who told him that he feared his wound might prove fatal. He then started out to finish his assailant and found him lying on a counter in a store; but being assured that the lieutenant could not live, gave orders that he should be carried to a hotel and cared for.

Forrest was weak from loss of blood and had to be carried away himself, but he soon rallied. A few days later the young officer was dying and sent for him. He admitted that he had acted rashly and begged the general's forgiveness, adding: "I am so thankful that I am the one to die and that you are spared to the

country." The interview was very touching; Forrest was all forgiveness and tears, and expressed the deepest regret over the occurrence. The strong man was a child again, and gave way to his emotions. Those who knew the young man say that while he appeared to be slow and imperturbable he had the soul of a soldier and was at once courageous and supersensitive. Forrest's powerful constitution triumphed, and he was soon in the saddle again. Referring to this affair afterward he said that he never wanted to kill anybody except an enemy, and then only when fighting for his country.

The long-contemplated advance of Rosecrans's army began on the 22d of June; Bragg was well advised of the fact, but did not care to risk another great engagement north of the Tennessee River as defeat would mean utter ruin. Forrest was ordered to fall back to Tullahoma by way of Shelbyville. Major-General Wheeler had been assigned charge of the movement and protection of the immense wagon-trains loaded with supplies collected for the whole army at Shelbyville. Forrest reached the outskirts of the town on the afternoon of June 27th, expecting to join Wheeler in crossing Duck River. Wheeler, however, had been hard pushed, and moved so rapidly that Forrest could not come up with him. He had crossed his command over Duck River and was on the south side ready to burn the bridge, when Major Rambaut came up and reported that Forrest with two brigades was in sight and liable to be cut off.

General Wheeler, with characteristic gallantry, recrossed to the north side of the river accompanied by General Martin and five hundred of his men, taking two pieces of artillery, which were placed in position. This was scarcely done when the Union cavalry in great force came thundering down on a charge. The guns, loaded with canister, were fired, but this did not

stop the solid mass of charging troopers; they ran over everything until they took those guns; Wheeler and Martin could make no resistance. The bridge was at once in the hands of the enemy, and blockaded at that by an overturned caisson. Those brave leaders saw but one way out and that was a desperate chance. Rallying their men, Wheeler and Martin spurred their horses over the bank and plunged full fifteen feet down into the swift, muddy river, greatly swollen by recent rains. They were followed by the men without pause, and nearly all disappeared when they first struck the water. As they rose and struggled for the opposite bank the Federals opened fire upon them, and it was estimated that forty or fifty were killed and drowned. Generals Wheeler and Martin escaped unhurt, General Gordon Granger failed to pursue that night, and the great wagon-train was soon beyond his reach.

Meantime Forrest, realizing the situation, made a dash for the nearest bridge, four miles east of Shelbyville, crossed safely over and went around to the protection of the train. On the 28th of June he overtook the main army at Tullahoma and was assigned to duty in the direction of Manchester, east of army headquarters. Colonel Starnes with his brigade was placed on that road, and on the 30th of June, in front of Tullahoma, encountered Crittenden's corps of Rosecrans's army, and in a heavy skirmish was mortally wounded. He was on the picket-line at the time encouraging his men to stand their ground. Starnes was an accomplished physician and gentleman and one of Forrest's best leaders. His loss was severely felt. That same night Forrest and his escort came in contact with a detachment of Wilder's famous brigade, capturing and killing a few and stampeding the rest. After this he was assigned the duty of securing and holding a pass in the Cumberland Mountains, near Cowan, Tenn., as

a part of the plan of Bragg's retreat to Chattanooga. From this point he covered the retreat of Hardee's corps moving over the mountains into the Sequatchie Valley, and had several sharp collisions with Federal cavalry, but these were not of serious consequence, although illustrating the vim and efficiency of both the Confederate cavalry and artillery and the tireless energy of the Union troops.

Dibbrell succeeded to the command of Starnes's brigade, and held the pass until July 4th, when, as no Federal force appeared, he followed the army to the Tennessee River. Armstrong had been sent on to Jasper to protect the flank on the northeast side, and as soon as the army crossed the river and was concentrated at Chattanooga, Forrest followed with his division, went into camp, and for two weeks gave his men a rest. On the 24th of July he was ordered to Kingston on the north side of the river, and given command of the Confederate cavalry in East Tennessee. This was a wide field, in which Union sentiments largely prevailed, and his assignment involved much hard work as well as some desultory fighting.

Colonel Dibbrell, with only three hundred men, had been sent with his Eighth Tennessee regiment to the neighborhood of Sparta, his old home, to confront a corps of Rosecrans's army, reported to be at McMinnville. An attempt was made by the Federal Colonel Robert H. Minty, with a force of seven hundred and seventy-four effectives, who marched all night, to surprise Colonel Dibbrell, but was at a disadvantage, and really fell into a trap on Calfkiller Creek. Forrest heard of this, and sent Colonel McLemore with two hundred men of the Fourth Tennessee and some ammunition to the relief of Dibbrell. There were other and minor engagements, but Dibbrell was on his own ground and remained master of the situation. His

campaign was a small but brilliant success over greatly superior numbers. On the 22d of August he received orders from Forrest to return and report at Kingston. Several of his officers and men had been allowed to go home to see their families and equip themselves for the fall and winter campaign, and some failed to report or deserted. So he crossed over to the east side of the Cumberland Mountains with only one hundred men.

A squadron of the Eleventh Tennessee penetrated as far northeast as Wartburg, Morgan County, Tenn., encountered a heavy Federal column of all arms, and after a daring brush escaped. Pegram's division had been kept well to the front to watch the various mountain passes. On the 31st of August Forrest received orders to evacuate East Tennessee with all his force except Scott's brigade, which was to remain at Loudon, on the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad where it crosses the Tennessee River some fifteen miles south of Kingston, and burn the big bridge at this place on the approach of the enemy. This was done ultimately after some hard fighting. The presence of so much Confederate cavalry in East Tennessee, some of it more than a hundred miles east of Chattanooga, gave rise in Union quarters to an apprehension that a move was to be made on Kentucky. Forrest moved south with celerity, but the wires were kept hot inquiring as to his movements or whereabouts for several days. Bragg was getting ready to evacuate Chattanooga, and when Forrest arrived there his forces were so distributed as to best cover the movement.

General Rosecrans and his chief of staff, General James A. Garfield, were at Trenton, Ga., and had ordered General Stanley with a force of thirteen regiments to make a raid in Bragg's rear, and thus perhaps accomplish what Streight had failed to do. Stanley

had his misgivings, but Garfield wrote him a very encouraging letter on the 7th of September, assuring him that Forrest's whole force and nearly all of Wheeler's were in the neighborhood of Chattanooga, and could not be brought to bear on his expedition. Stanley was urged and ordered to make a move that was expected to sever the enemy's communication with Atlanta. The Federal forces had crossed the Tennessee River at various points and were moving south by different routes widely apart, without meeting much concerted resistance. As the evacuation of Chattanooga began Forrest was ordered to hasten with Armstrong's division toward Rome, to assist in repelling the cavalry movement reported in that direction. Reaching Somerville by forced marches he found Wharton's division of Wheeler's cavalry there, and learned that the enemy was climbing the mountain near Alpine, some forty miles from Chattanooga. Selecting about twelve hundred of his own men he moved forward in conjunction with Wharton and checked the movement; then was ordered back to report to General Bragg at Lafayette, and there directed to ascertain the enemy's movements in the direction of Chattanooga.

On the afternoon of the 10th he learned that two divisions of Crittenden's corps had advanced across the Chickamauga at Red House Bridge on the Ringgold road, nine miles out from Chattanooga. Seeing that Crittenden had no near support, he planned for his capture, and so advised Bragg and Polk, who were only six miles away, but received no response. He even procured guides and prepared to go around and take Red House Bridge, but all for naught. To a man of Forrest's intuitive perceptions of the art of war and executive ability, it must have been very galling to find that he had been sent on such a wild-goose chase. At midnight he went to look for General Bragg, and

found that he had gone to Lafayette and ordered thither all the infantry in that neighborhood.

Hastening back, Forrest placed Scott's brigade, only nine hundred strong, and four pieces of artillery, across Crittenden's line of march and stubbornly contested his advance on the 11th, but was gradually forced back to Ringgold and thence to Tunnel Hill. One or two positions were held with desperate tenacity. Finally Pegram, who had been hanging on the Federal right flank in the direction of Lafayette with part of his division, joined Forrest, and Dibbrell came up with his brigade from Dalton where he had been sent after the movement to Alpine. Here Forrest made a final stand in a strong position. His men were dismounted and fought as infantry. Pegram handled his men with great skill, and Colonel Hart of the Sixth Georgia made a charge upon a large force of infantry and captured over fifty prisoners. The Federals retired, and at Ringgold moved westward and took the position which had been vacated by Polk and Buckner. In this isolated position they remained two days. General Bragg finally ordered Polk to attack Crittenden on the morning of the 13th, but the latter had quietly and prudently concluded to rejoin the main force or part of it some hours before. This was set down by military critics as another of Bragg's lost opportunities.

Several times during this campaign Rosecrans's commands were so widely separated without the possibility of immediate reenforcement that Bragg could have destroyed a corps. The effective force of each army may be roughly estimated as follows: Rosecrans, fifty-two thousand three hundred and ninety-two infantry and artillery, and seventy-five hundred cavalry; in round numbers sixty thousand, with one hundred and seventy guns. Bragg had about thirty-five thousand bayonets, seventy-five hundred cavalry

rank and file, and one hundred and fifty guns; and five small brigades from Virginia and Mississippi arrived at Ringgold on the 17th. In the absence of General Hood these were assigned to the command of Brigadier-General Bushrod R. Johnson. General Rosecrans on the 16th despatched to General Burnside, near Knoxville: "The enemy intend us all the mischief in their power. It is of the utmost importance that you close down this way to cover our left flank. We have not the force to cover our flank against Forrest now. He could cross the river above us before we could discover it. I want all the help we can get promptly."* Thus we have some idea of the general situation and of the especial operations of Forrest up to date without going into numerous minor details. Rosecrans had slowly brought together the bulk of his army in the Chickamauga Valley, south of Lees and Gordons Mills. Bragg had massed his forces around Lafayette, and there was a division of six brigades at Catoosa and Ringgold.

This brings us to the very edge of the great battle of Chickamauga, in which Forrest took such an active part. Bragg issued an order to take the offensive, although the clash of arms could not have been much longer averted. General Bushrod R. Johnson, who had fought so well with Forrest at Fort Donelson, was to bring on the engagement. Early on the morning of the 18th of September Johnson moved out from Ringgold with four brigades: (1) his own; (2) McNair's; (3) Gregg's, and (4) J. B. Robertson's (Hood's old brigade), forty-two hundred strong and twelve guns. He was to cross Chickamauga Creek at Reids Bridge and sweep up-stream (southward) and clear the road toward Lees and Gordons Mills. This was the ex-

* Rebellion Records, part iii, vol. xxx, p. 691.

treme right of infantry with Forrest, and only a small command at that on the farther flank. He had been resting at Dalton for a few days with his escort and only a remnant of John Morgan's command, about two hundred in all, while the remnant of his division was scattered at different points of observation. Next on Bushrod R. Johnson's left was Major-General William H. T. Walker's division, and then Buckner's.

Johnson approached Reids Bridge about noon on the 18th; Forrest with his small force went to the front, and Pegram's division, coming up, was placed on the left as a support. Skirmishing began at Pea Vine Creek, Forrest bringing on the fight, and the Federals, after a gallant fight, were pushed back by cavalry and infantry, and recrossed without having time to burn the bridge. Thus it happened that Forrest brought on the great battle.

The entire Confederate force at that point crossed the Chickamauga, was joined by Pegram's division, and marched up the creek in the direction of Alexanders Bridge. Major-General John B. Hood reached the ground about 4 P. M., and assumed command of the troops on that part of the field. After scouting and picketing to the right of the position, Forrest bivouacked with his troops in the rear of Hood's line. That night, about nine o'clock, he rode with General Hood to Bragg's headquarters, where he was instructed to develop the enemy early next morning on the extreme Confederate right and report his movements to the nearest commanders. He was assured of prompt reenforcements if he brought on a general engagement. General Walker was especially directed to respond to all his requisitions.

Early on the morning of the 19th, Forrest led Pegram's division northward to Jay's sawmill, about three-quarters of a mile west of Reids Bridge, and

there encountered a heavy Federal force. Realizing that he was outnumbered he sent Major W. C. Anderson of his staff for Armstrong's division, seven miles south with Polk's corps, and also called on Walker for a brigade of infantry. Dismounting his small force, except Rucker, he deployed his men as infantry and forced back the Federal skirmishers several hundred yards. The Federals assumed the defensive; Rucker charged with his two battalions, the Twelfth and Sixteenth, dashed down upon the main force in gallant style, but was met by a heavy fire, and after losing some men and taking a few prisoners, had to fall back.

It was discovered that while the Confederates had moved up the creek (southward) the previous evening, the Federals had shifted their forces down toward Chattanooga. The Confederates were outflanked, and reenforcements came slowly to Forrest. Only Dibbrell's brigade could be spared in the forenoon, and upon arriving, about twelve o'clock, this was dismounted and was soon in the thick of the fight, but no infantry came. Ordering Pegram to hold his position at all hazards, Forrest dashed off to look for infantry support. Pegram obeyed orders but at a heavy cost. In his report he says: "It became apparent that we were fighting overpowering numbers. General Forrest having sent several messages for the infantry to come up finally went for them himself, ordering me to hold the position until their arrival. In obeying the order our loss was about one-fourth of the command."

Colonel Claudius C. Wilson's brigade of Georgians at last came to the rescue, and swung into line on Pegram's left. The Union line was driven back and a battery captured. Forrest was now in command of all the troops on this end of the line, and with Wilson's veterans drove back two lines of the enemy until a

third was discovered in a strong position. Just then General M. D. Ector appeared on the field with his brigade, mainly Texans, and, reporting to General Forrest, was thrown to Wilson's right, while the dismounted cavalry was pushed still farther over on the Confederate flank. Before these forces could be well aligned the Federals, being reenforced, came forward with a heavy column which flanked Wilson's left. A terrific fire opened, and Forrest's entire line was forced back. Even the captured battery was lost because the horses were all killed, and the Confederates were unable to run off the guns by hand.

Morton's and Huggins's batteries, which had been close up at the front, were barely able to get away in the face of a Federal charge made with fixed bayonets in magnificent style. The horses of one gun in Huggins's battery were all killed or wounded, but Forrest quickly utilized the horses of four members of his escort and had the guns dragged off to a place of safety. The Federals, under General Thomas, had concentrated five divisions in front of Jay's sawmill, and throwing up solid breastworks were enabled to open a sweeping fire from small arms and artillery. Forrest had as yet only two small divisions of cavalry, including Armstrong, who came up with his remaining brigade about one o'clock, less than thirty-five hundred effectives with eight guns, and four of Walker's brigades, which had come up with sixteen guns; altogether about nine thousand and seventy-five men. General W. H. T. Walker assumed command of all the infantry. This combined force made a superb charge and broke through two Federal lines, capturing many prisoners from as many as seven different regiments, and all the artillery in the immediate front. But a third Federal line was discovered which overlapped the Confederates, and obliged them to retreat hastily.

Meantime Cheatham's division of five brigades—Jackson's, Maney's, Strahl's, Preston Smith's, and Marcus J. Wright's, of Polk's corps—had crossed the Chickamauga about 7 A. M. at Dalton's Ford, and moving northward a short distance, remained in line of battle until after 12 M. At a late hour in the events of the day, Cheatham received orders to reenforce Walker. At 1 P. M. he moved to the right and took a position with three brigades in front—Jackson's, Smith's, and Wright's—and the two others in reserve. Quickly moving his Tennesseeans to the front, they were soon in conflict with the movement which was pressing back Walker and Forrest. The sanguinary, fluctuating fight raged for several hours, Forrest and Walker continually taking part. In one of the hottest places Forrest had the horse killed under him which was presented by the citizens of Rome, Ga. At one time the Federals were forced back three-quarters of a mile, but with reenforcements were able to turn the tide of battle once more.

Maney's and Strahl's brigades and Turner's North Carolina battery, supported by Major John W. Dawson with a battalion from the One Hundred and Fifty-fourth Tennessee, withstood the counter-movement successfully for a time until Forrest brought up two of his own batteries, Huggins's and Huwald's eight guns, with the Fourth and Eighth regiments and Starnes's battalion of Dibbrell's brigade, and opened fire on the Federal left flank at a range of only eighty yards, and turned back the solid line of blue that had been sweeping everything before it. The battle, although not general, and covering a field little more than a mile long and three-quarters of a mile wide, had raged nearly all day. Rosecrans's forces, quite in contrast to their first widely scattered positions south of the Tennessee River, were better concentrated and more

methodically pressed into the fight than the Confederates, although the fortunes of the day seemed at times to be in favor of the latter, and at nightfall they held more ground than at any time during the day.

Cleburne's division of Hill's corps was held eastward of Chickamauga until late in the afternoon, and then ordered to cross at Thedfords Ford and report to General Polk and thence to the Confederate right, where a line was formed about a mile long facing westward and with the right just in advance of Jay's sawmill, three hundred yards in rear of Cheatham. At six o'clock these two divisions were ordered to attack across the battle-ground of the day; Key's and Semple's batteries were run up within sixty yards of the Federal lines, and opened a rapid fire. Polk's brigade of Cleburne's, and Jackson's and Smith's of Cheatham's divisions were also pushed to the front, when the Federal divisions under Johnson and Baird gave way leaving several pieces of artillery with caissons, and losing also three hundred prisoners and the colors of the Seventy-seventh Indiana and Seventy-ninth Pennsylvania. Cleburne and Cheatham advanced fully a mile, readjusted their lines, and bivouacked upon their arms. In this engagement the Confederates lost one of their superior brigade commanders, General Preston Smith, and at the same time two of his gallant and excellent staff officers, Captain John Donelson, his adjutant-general, and an aide, Captain Thomas H. King.

While the heavier fighting of the day took place on the Confederate right it was not confined to this quarter. Preston's and Stewart's divisions of Buckner's corps crossed Chickamauga at Thedfords and Daltons fords, and remained in line of battle in that neighborhood until in the afternoon, when the latter was ordered to the right with no specific instructions. Clayton's brigade was thrown into action, and in one

hour lost nearly four hundred officers and men killed and wounded. The brigade was replaced by John C. Brown's Tennesseeans, who forced back the Federal lines and captured eight rifled guns, five of which were carried off the field. Bates's brigade was next thrown in, and in conjunction with Clayton's pushed the Federals across the Chattanooga road, but near sunset fell back, bringing some captured artillery and several hundred prisoners, including a lieutenant-colonel of the staff of Major-General Thomas. The loss of these brigades was severe.

The battle had extended farther to the left also. Preston's division of Buckner's corps, and Bushrod Johnson's and McLean's of Hood's corps, after remaining in line of battle about a thousand yards eastward of Vinyard's house from 7 A. M. to 2 P. M., sustained an attack which, with the aid of Bledsoe's and Everett's batteries, was repulsed. Bushrod Johnson was ordered to attack in return. A stubborn engagement ensued, and the Federals were driven across the road and Fulton's brigade of Tennesseeans made a successful flank movement on a battery, Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. Snowden, of the Twenty-fifth Tennessee, leading the charge. This was soon repulsed and the brigade fell back rapidly east of the road, leaving seventy-five prisoners of the Twenty-seventh Tennessee and the captured guns, but a rally was made and the advancing column was again driven westward of the road. About 3 P. M. Trigg's brigade of Preston's division was sent to Buckner to support Robertson's Texans of McLean's division. The Federals were forced into their works, but soon opened a galling fire which was most disastrous, especially to the Sixth Florida, and the Confederates fell back as darkness came on, and without going very far rested on their arms for the night.

The Federal divisions mostly engaged that day were Thomas's, Davis's, McCook's, and Wood's, of Crittenden's corps, with a brigade of Sheridan's division that came up last and, as General Rosecrans says, saved Wood's division from disaster. Brannan also came upon the field late in the afternoon. The Federal army-corps were all engaged, except two divisions of Sheridan's corps and Mitchell's cavalry, and they were brought squarely into action. The Confederates were fought by detail and, while making many splendid dashes, were often at a disadvantage in the face of superior numbers. There was a fatal want of concentration. About twelve thousand veterans of the infantry were not engaged at all. Breckenridge's division, three thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine rank and file, was ordered across the Chickamauga so late as to enable it to reach a position in the rear of Cleburne only at eleven o'clock at night. Hindman's division, five thousand six hundred and twenty-one bayonets, aggregate six thousand one hundred and two, also remained eastward of the creek until the middle of the afternoon, and reached the scene of Bushrod R. Johnson's fighting after sunset. Two of Preston's brigades, three thousand effectives, were likewise unemployed. During the day General Thomas moved still nearer Chattanooga as a wise military precaution, and threw up heavy earthworks at night.

A little after daylight, on Sunday, September 20th, Breckenridge moved up and took a position on Cleburne's right. This now became the extreme right of infantry, with Forrest, as usual, on the flank. Lieutenant-General Longstreet arrived at Catoosa Station on the afternoon of the 19th, and at 11 P. M. reported at army headquarters. The plan of battle for next day was explained to him by General Bragg. The right grand division was to be commanded by Lieutenant-

General Polk. This embraced Hill's corps, Walker's reserve corps, and Cheatham's division of his own corps, covered on the right flank by Forrest's two cavalry divisions, Armstrong's and Pegram's. The left grand division was to be commanded by Longstreet. This was composed of Buckner's corps, Hindman's division of Polk's corps, Bushrod R. Johnson's provisional division, and Hood's and McLaws's divisions of Longstreet's own corps. The battle was to open early in the morning on the right, to be followed in succession toward the left. These orders were not communicated to General Hill, who was only apprised of the facts at 8 A. M. by General Bragg in person. By a fatal miscarriage of orders the attack was not made until 9.30 A. M. Breckenridge advanced at that hour, and by ten o'clock was fully engaged. Forrest's command stretched northward some two miles to the Chickamauga. Scott was absent watching the movements of Granger. Hindman's division was on the extreme left, and next on the right was Bushrod R. Johnson's division drawn up in several lines; Wheeler covered that flank and watched the passes and fords.

Armstrong's division was dismounted to fight as infantry, with the exception of the First Tennessee and McDonald's battalion, retained as cavalry. Forrest advanced with Pegram's division in reserve, and within half a mile struck a brigade of Baird's division and was soon in a warm skirmish about the time that Breckenridge became heavily engaged. The Kentuckians fought desperately and lost heavily. Here fell mortally wounded Brigadier-General Ben Hardin Helm, an accomplished and almost idolized commander. The Second and Ninth Kentucky and three companies of the Forty-first Alabama were engaged in this bloody affair. The remainder of the brigade advanced across the Chattanooga road, captured a sec-

tion of Napoleon guns and retired, and rejoined other regiments of the brigade to the rearward. In two hours' hard fighting the Kentuckians suffered terrible losses, and General Breckenridge spoke of it as "one of the bloodiest encounters of the day." Meantime there was heavy fighting farther on the left with varying results, while Forrest and Armstrong moved forward on the right and, meeting little resistance, soon passed the alinement of infantry.

Being reenforced by Adams's and Stovall's brigades of Breckenridge's division, the Confederate cavalry presented a formidable front. General Thomas called for help, which was ordered from Rosecrans's right. At this instant Gordon Granger's corps came in sight at a double-quick, this being the reserve of the Army of Tennessee. Forrest opened on the column with three batteries and retarded Granger's march for an hour until reenforcements came to him from Thomas. After further fighting at close range Granger was enabled to join the main command. Owing to the fierceness of the Confederate attack on the right, although begun at a late hour and in an irregular manner, Rosecrans was compelled to draw reenforcements from his right and thus weaken his lines to the south. This gave Longstreet an opportunity of which he was prompt to take advantage. The battle in that direction was decidedly in favor of the Confederates, although the losses were terrible on both sides.

The Confederates on the right had been hurled against well-manned breastworks and superior numbers all day, and the advantages gained by Forrest and Breckenridge at times were only temporary. It was all important for the Federals to keep an open road to Chattanooga. The accession of Granger's force added forty-five hundred fresh bayonets and twelve guns to Thomas, and at the last he had fully eight divisions,

thirty-five thousand strong, under his ever watchful and vigorous command. At one time in the afternoon there was a lull in the operations of the right Confederate wing of fully two hours, caused by some lack in active management. This only gave Thomas the more time to strengthen his position. Some of the hardest and best fighting on the right was done by Forrest's old brigade, Armstrong's and Dibbrell's. Late in the afternoon there was superb work done by Breckenridge's, Liddell's, Cleburne's, and Cheatham's divisions. All monuments erected in Chickamauga Park to the Federal dead are, in a reflected light, monuments to their foes who fell wearing the gray. For without the latter the other would never have lived in history or been wrought into speaking figures by the sculptor.

The Federal right wing was routed, and the Confederates under Stewart, Bushrod Johnson, Hindman, Buckner, and others, under the masterful direction of Longstreet, occupied the gap in their lines and hurried the fleeing masses toward Chattanooga. Forty cannon were captured, three thousand prisoners, and ten regimental colors. The Confederate losses were proportionately heavy, being one thousand and eighty-nine officers and men killed, six thousand four hundred and six wounded, and two hundred and seventy-two missing, an aggregate of seven thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven out of twenty-two thousand eight hundred and eighty-two officers and men engaged.* At nightfall Longstreet's forces bivouacked on the field and filled ammunition-boxes, expecting to go in pursuit of the enemy early next morning. It should be added that Wheeler operated actively and effectively on the left, and late in the afternoon followed the fleeing Federals and captured about one thousand prisoners.

* Longstreet's report.

Forrest says of the final assault made on the right on the 20th, that he "employed fourteen pieces of artillery, terminating on the right flank the battle of Chickamauga. My command was kept on the field on the night of the 20th, and men and horses suffered greatly for want of water. The men were without rations, and the horses had only received a partial feed once during the two days' engagement." General D. H. Hill, who first saw Forrest on the field early that morning, complimented him in the highest terms of eulogy, and said: "I would ask no better fortune, if again placed on a flank, than to have such a vigilant, gallant, and accomplished officer guarding its approaches," etc. The fleeing Federals from the right made undignified haste in the direction of Chattanooga, twelve miles distant, carrying with them their commander-in-chief, General Rosecrans, two corps commanders, McCook and Crittenden, and Assistant-Secretary of War Charles A. Dana, who was representing the President of the United States and the Secretary of War on the field. Thomas held his troops together at Snodgrass Hill, and followed more leisurely. Mr. Dana sent a sensational telegram to Mr. Stanton, comparing Chickamauga to Bull Run. He had been on the right wing, and subsequently modified his despatch. Many years afterward he wrote a description of the battle, and spoke of making his way into Chattanooga "through a panic-stricken rabble." Forrest and his men slept near where the last fighting occurred that Sunday evening, and at four o'clock on Monday morning, the 21st, with General Armstrong and a strong advance-guard, moved toward Chattanooga on the Lafayette road. Nearing Rossville, they charged with their four hundred troopers upon a Federal rear-guard of cavalry. The latter fired a volley and fled toward Chattanooga at full speed. In this

charge Forrest's horse was mortally wounded and soon fell dead.

At the end of the pursuit the Confederates were on a spur of Missionary Ridge, and captured four Federals out of trees where they had been stationed as observers. Taking a pair of glasses from one of these Forrest mounted to the platform in a tree-top from whence he had a good view of the town and valley of Chattanooga and surrounding mountains, and while standing there in the observer's place, he dictated to Major Charles W. Anderson a despatch to General Polk to be forwarded to General Bragg, giving his impressions. These may have been optimistic, but they possibly had the effect of changing the plans of the Confederate commander-in-chief, that is, if he intended to pursue or attempt to flank the Federals. It was certain that Rosecrans's army was crowding into Chattanooga, and there was evidence of a retreat back across the Tennessee River. The streets of the town were blocked with a floundering mass of troops, artillery, army wagons, ambulances, and beef cattle.

Coming down from the tree Forrest dictated various other despatches to Bragg and Polk giving his views of the situation. Then he moved forward and northward to a point within four miles of Chattanooga overlooking the place, and found a Federal force too strong to be assaulted by his men. McLemore led the Fourth Tennessee to a point within three miles of Chattanooga. This was the Confederate high-water mark from the raging tides of the bloody battle of Chickamauga. McLemore could have been easily captured by the Federals if they had not been hastening to join the main force. He captured numerous prisoners, and was recalled by General Forrest, who had seen a demoralized army crowding into Chattanooga, and look-

ing back saw the Confederate army lying listless and torpid after two days' battle.

This was not his idea of war. He would have thrown Bragg's entire force on Chattanooga, and was deeply chagrined at the policy of inaction, but General Bragg sent him word that he had set his infantry in motion toward Chattanooga by the Red House Bridge road, all the approaches to which were to be picketed by his cavalry. At ten o'clock that evening he called at General Bragg's headquarters and was assured that a general advance would be made next morning. Forrest assembled his force at 8 A. M. on the 22d, on Missionary Ridge, and seeing no signs of an advance moved down into the valley of the Chattanooga and drove back the Federal cavalry and infantry pickets to within half a mile of the town. His men were dismounted and extended in a line nearly two miles long. After that different roads were occupied and picketed. Dibbrell sustained a loss of several officers and fifty or sixty of his men killed and wounded in seizing the road around the northern end of Lookout Mountain. McLaws's division of Longstreet's corps came up at one o'clock, but merely to serve on picket duty. Forrest urged General McLaws to join him in an attack upon the still demoralized enemy, but he declined upon the ground that his orders would not permit it. Several attempts were made during the day to dislodge Dibbrell, and he only held on by fighting hard with his men dismounted. He had the Fourth, Eighth, Tenth, and Eleventh Tennessee regiments and Starnes's battalion, and he was not relieved until 12 M. the next day, although Forrest had repeatedly asked for an infantry brigade to take the place. His lines extended from Lookout Mountain on the west to the Tennessee River on the east, and his troops and horses were quite worn out and weak from hunger. On the

23d the command was ordered to Tyners Station on the railroad, some nine miles east of Chattanooga, to find food and forage.

This practically ended Forrest's connection with the Army of Tennessee under General Bragg, although he did not withdraw at once. He had expressed himself rather freely in regard to Bragg's failure to follow up the battle of Chickamauga, which doubtless came to the latter's ears. So in Bragg's report of December 28th he merely said: "Brigadier-General Forrest's report will show equally gallant and valuable services by his command on our right." A few days later Forrest was relieved of his command, and this was accepted as an evidence of General Bragg's displeasure.

CHAPTER X.

IN A NEW FIELD.—PROMOTED TO MAJOR-GENERAL.

ONLY twenty-four hours were allowed the command to rest at Tyners Station when, in accordance with definite orders received from army headquarters, it was again set in motion. Pegram's and Scott's brigades and Rucker's Legion were detached to picket the Tennessee eastward to Hiwassee River, forty miles above Chattanooga, while Forrest was to take Armstrong's and Davidson's brigades and move beyond to check a movement under Burnside supposed to be coming from Knoxville. He was reenforced at Cleveland by Hodge's brigade, eight hundred strong, and passed on to Charleston, twelve miles distant. Throwing Davidson to the right and Armstrong to the left, he moved forward on the main road. With Dibbrell's and Hodge's brigades and Morton's and Huggins's batteries, he drove in the pickets encountered, and under cover of eight guns rushed his men across the Hiwassee at Charleston and forced the Federals from their positions on the east side. In this dash the Confederates reported eight or ten killed and wounded, while the Federal loss was supposed to be much larger. Armstrong came in on the left and joined in the pursuit for five or six miles. A running fight continued from Charleston to Loudon, a distance of forty-one miles, and some sharp engagements occurred at several points.

An order overtook Forrest at Loudon which

changed the course of his life. The commanding general could well be charged with having nursed his wrath and his deep-seated dislike until the aggressive brigadier-general was well and safely out of sight. He chose a time to deliver a blow which would have been fatal to most men of Forrest's rank. The order was as follows:

MISSIONARY RIDGE, *September* 28, 1863.

Brigadier-General FORREST, *near Athens.*

GENERAL: The general commanding desires that you will, without delay, turn over the troops of your command previously ordered to Major-General Wheeler.

This was construed as a direct personal thrust. Forrest was on good terms with General Wheeler socially, but he had never recanted the vow he made on the evening of the Dover affair.

Falling back at once to Cleveland he turned over all of his command to General Wheeler except Dibbrell's brigade and Huggins's battery, which he was allowed to retain for the time being. He dictated a vigorous protest to General Bragg and followed this up by a visit in person, during which he indulged in language of denunciation to which the ears of the commander-in-chief were unused. Dr. J. B. Cowan, who accompanied Forrest when he called upon General Bragg, without being informed as to the object of the visit in advance, states (1902) that Forrest refused to take Bragg's offered hand and denounced him in the strongest possible language for having relieved him for the third time of his command. Forrest said in part:

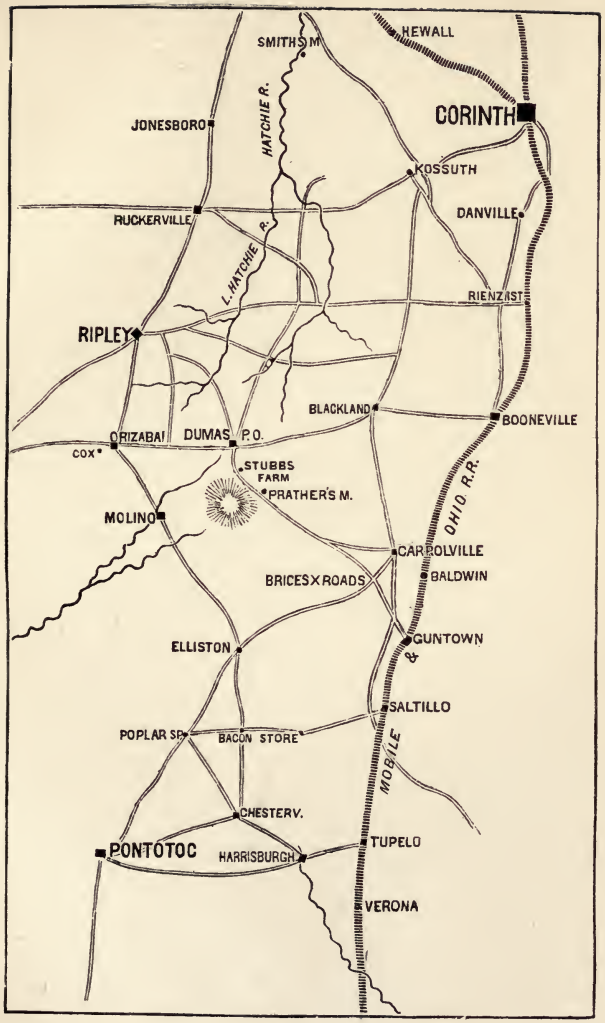
"You commenced your cowardly and contemptible persecution of me soon after the battle of Shiloh, and you have kept it up ever since. You did it because I reported to Richmond facts while you reported damned lies. You robbed me of my command in Kentucky and gave it to one of your favorites—men that I armed and

equipped from the enemies of our country. In a spirit of revenge and spite, because I would not fawn upon you as others did, you drove me into West Tennessee in the winter of 1862, with a second brigade I had organized, with improper arms and without sufficient ammunition, although I had made repeated applications for the same. You did it to ruin me and my career. When in spite of this I returned with my command well equipped by captures, you began again your work of spite and persecution, and have kept it up; and now this second brigade, organized without trouble to you or the Government, a brigade which has won a reputation for successful fighting second to none in the army, taking advantage of your position as commanding general in order to further humiliate me, you have taken these brave men from me. I have stood your meanness as long as I intend to. You have played the part of a damned scoundrel and are a coward, and if you were any part of a man I would slap your jaws and force you to resent it. You may as well not issue any more orders to me for I will not obey them, and I will hold you personally responsible for any further indignities you endeavor to inflict upon me. You have threatened to arrest me for not obeying your orders promptly. I dare you to do it! And I say to you that if you ever again try to interfere with me or cross my path it will be at the peril of your life."* Bragg sat down on a stool in the back part of his tent and listened to this fierce tirade without making a movement or saying a word in reply; nor did he order Forrest's arrest or appear to take any further notice of the incident, but that he cherished a strong animosity against Forrest even after he went to Richmond was demon-

* Wyeth's Life of Forrest, pp. 265, 266, and letter from Dr. James B. Cowan, in possession of the author.

strated in various ways. Forrest did not offer to resign, but told his friends that he would do so and seek a new field rather than suffer further persecution. He was given to understand, however, that his command would be restored to him as soon as General Wheeler returned from a move in the rear of Rosecrans's army. Resting upon this assurance he obtained a leave of absence for ten days to go to La Grange, Ga., and meet his wife whom he had not seen for eighteen months. Hardly had he settled down to rest at La Grange when he received an order dated October 3d placing him directly under the command of Major-General Wheeler. Regarding this as another personal affront and abuse of power, as well as a flagrant violation of former assurances, Forrest was greatly incensed and resolved never to fight again either under Wheeler or Bragg, even if it became necessary to resign his commission and seek some other field.

Another cause of this rupture may be found in the fact that as early as August 9, 1863, General Forrest, while stationed at Kingston, East Tennessee, had written to General S. Cooper, adjutant-general at Richmond, proposing and asking permission to recruit a large force within the enemy's lines for the purpose of interrupting the navigation of the Mississippi River between Cairo and Vicksburg. As a nucleus he wished to have about four hundred and fifty men from his command, his escort of sixty, McDonald's battalion of one hundred and fifty, the Second Kentucky Cavalry, two hundred and fifty, and four 3-inch Dahlgren or Parrott guns with eight No. 1 horses to each gun and caisson, two wagons for the battery, one pack-mule to every ten men, and two hundred rounds of ammunition for small arms and artillery. He also asked that Captain W. W. Carnes, of



Map of Pontotoc to Corinth.

Memphis, connected with Bragg's army, be detached to command the battery. This communication was sent to pass through General Bragg, and may have given offense. Ten days later a copy was sent direct to President Davis but no action was taken. With such a commission and force as Forrest desired he could have given great trouble. Bragg could not afford to give up such a man, and the value of his practical ideas was not understood at Richmond.

Mr. Davis was, however, very favorably inclined toward Forrest, and coming upon the scene about the time of the disagreement proved to be his stanch friend. He would not entertain the idea of a resignation, but wrote Forrest a gracious and encouraging letter, appointing a day for a meeting at Montgomery, Ala., when he should have returned from a trip to Mississippi. They met and had a long and satisfactory conference. Forrest was assured that he should be transferred to north Mississippi with such forces as General Bragg had to spare. Forrest traveled with President Davis and suite as far as Atlanta and proceeded thence directly to headquarters. General Bragg promised him that he should have for his new field of action besides his escort company, McDonald's and Woodward's battalions, but the written order received next morning withheld Woodward's battalion. The parting of Forrest from his old command, with which he had shared so many dangers and hardships, was very trying and touching after such a long and close association.

The pathetically small force starting with Forrest to Mississippi consisted of the field and staff, eight; escort company, sixty-five; McDonald's battalion, one hundred and thirty-nine; Captain J. W. Morton's battery, sixty-seven; total, two hundred and seventy-

nine.* Proceeding directly to Rome the command was detained a few days in preparing for the march across the country by way of Talladega, Tuscaloosa, and Columbus to Okolona, Miss., and arrived at the latter place about the middle of November. The troops of Forrest's old command remaining with the army gave up their leader with deep regret. The Fourth, Eighth, Tenth, and Eleventh Tennessee Cavalry had been organized by him as a brigade and commanded by him in his West Tennessee raid the year before, at Thompsons Station and in the capture of Streight's command, and in various engagements. These and other troops united in a petition to General Bragg praying that they might also be transferred with General Forrest, if consistent with the welfare of the service. But the general was not able, even if he had been willing, to give up so much cavalry from the main body of the army.

While the small force already mentioned was marching through the country, Forrest, without a brigade, went around by rail, and reached Okolona on the 15th of November and found a few of his veterans already there. On the way he had stopped to have a conference with General Joseph E. Johnston, who gave him a hearty welcome to his department, approved his plans, and issued orders to General Stephen D. Lee, chief of cavalry, to support him as far as possible in all his projects.

At that time there were only three small Confederate cavalry brigades in north Mississippi. These furnished details for a line of outposts from Panola eastward to the south bank of Tallahatchie River, by way of Rocky Ford to Saltillo or Baldwin on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, with scouts well out in

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxi, part iii, p. 646.

front to watch hostile movements of the enemy. One of these brigades was subdivided into semibrigades under Colonels McCulloch and Slemmons, commanded by General James R. Chalmers on the left, while Brigadier-General Ferguson and Colonel Ross with their brigades went to the right of Rocky Ford. The Federals had strong forces at Memphis and Corinth, and well-defended posts between these two points, some ninety miles apart, on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, and could easily and rapidly throw troops from one place to another. They had at least ten thousand available men. There was supposed to be another Confederate brigade at Okolona, under Colonel R. V. Richardson, but instead of being two thousand strong, as appeared on paper, it numbered only about two hundred and fifty. Colonel Richardson could only produce two hundred and seventy-one guns, one hundred and fifty-one pistols, and two hundred and forty-seven horses fit for duty. He explained that he had brought many of the men out of West Tennessee in the summer and that they had gone back without permission to secure heavier clothing and had taken with them five hundred and seventeen rifles. Another regiment was promised Forrest, but it reported at Okolona with only one hundred and fifty men, and one-fourth of these were without arms. Forrest's own force had been reduced by want of mounts and by sickness and fatigue to about two hundred and fifty rank and file. To this was added four hundred raw troops who had never smelled gunpowder in battle, yet most of these ultimately became very effective soldiers.

Forrest's plan was to break through the strongly fortified line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, go into West Tennessee and collect supplies and recruits to be rushed back the same way, and he was not deterred by the insignificance of his command. He

had confidence that once inside of the lines he could rally the fighting element in sufficient strength to organize an effective force. General S. D. Lee was to cover the movement, and assembled two brigades at New Albany. Generals Forrest and Lee and Colonel Richardson met there on the 29th of November. It had been raining for over a month and all the streams were overflowing.

A bridge had to be built across the Tallahatchie, and the passage was not effected until the 3d of December. Ferguson led his own and Ross's brigades northward by way of Ripley; Chalmers with a demi-brigade under McCulloch crossed at Rocky Ford to join Ferguson, and Slemmons crossed at Panola and was advancing to threaten the railroad westward from La Grange. Ferguson approaching Saulsbury, seven miles eastward of La Grange, encountered a picket-post four miles south of the place, and pressed forward upon the main body. Morton's artillery opened fire briskly; the way was clear for Forrest to pass over the danger line, and parting company with General Lee and his force, he boldly led his little band into West Tennessee. He had nothing to retard his progress but two guns of Morton's battery and five light ordnance wagons.

Pushing on with scouts well thrown out he reached Van Buren, ten miles from the railroad, and camped there that evening. The scouts reported no pursuit in sight. Moving on, Forrest reached Bolivar at 8 A. M. on the 5th, where he and his men were welcomed with demonstrations of great joy. Resting only two hours, during which time an old bridge was repaired so as to afford a means of crossing the Hatchie, he was again on the move. Scouts were thrown toward Memphis and Corinth to report any hostile movements intended to cut off his retreat. Late in the afternoon of the

6th he reached Jackson and was welcomed by the entire population, and as his coming was expected ample forage and subsistence were found already prepared. There he found Colonel Tyree H. Bell, whom he had known in Bragg's army, and who had been sent within the lines with a small detachment to give it out that Forrest was coming to occupy West Tennessee permanently, and to stir up those who had been sent into that section of the State to raise commands or gather up absentees from the army; and Colonel Bell, who had been senior colonel of Preston Smith's brigade, was well calculated to rally the people and render valuable assistance to Forrest.

Three regiments were rapidly recruited and organized, and although not armed were eventually marched out under Colonels A. N. Wilson, John T. Newsom, R. M. Russell, and Lieutenant-Colonel D. M. Wisdom, veterans who had already seen much service in other commands. Colonel C. R. Barteau's Second Tennessee regiment was afterward joined with these regiments, forming a brigade of which Colonel Tyree H. Bell became commander. Forrest had not reckoned without his host, for as early as the 6th of December, he advised General Johnston from Jackson that he was highly pleased with the prospect; that he had gathered together about five thousand men, and if not molested he thought by the first of January he could put about eight thousand effective troops in the field.

The Federal authorities were quick to learn of Forrest's coming, even before he crossed the Tallahatchie. At first the movement was treated rather indifferently, but as recruiting stations were soon established in out-of-the-way places in nearly every county of West Tennessee and some in Kentucky, vigorous measures were resolved upon by Generals Grant and Sherman to kill, capture, or expel the intruders. Ex-

peditions were formed against Forrest at Columbus, Ky., and Fort Pillow. It was not these he dreaded so much, but others that might come out from Memphis or some other point on the railroad in his rear. He requested that General Stephen D. Lee with all the cavalry that could be spared be brought up to West Tennessee with arms and ammunition needed for the new troops. He believed if this was done the Memphis and Charleston Railroad could be destroyed and five or six thousand head of beef cattle driven out for the use of the army, and added: "If I hear that he is coming to help me I will build a pontoon bridge across the Hatchie and will have the cattle gathered up by the time he can reach me. I am in great need of money and have had to advance my quartermaster and commissary $20,000 of my private funds to subsist the command thus far.*

He also sent an aide-de-camp, Major M. C. Gallaway, to Richmond, to impress upon the President the importance of destroying the Memphis and Charleston Railroad and blockading the Tennessee River in order to make sure of holding the granaries and cattle of West Tennessee for the supply of the army, and also asked that Generals Pillow and Armstrong be sent to his assistance. These requests were unheeded, but President Davis was not unmindful of Forrest's services and merits, and on the 13th of December in a communication to General Johnston said: "Brigadier-General Forrest is promoted to the rank of major-general, and will, I hope, supply your wants in northern Mississippi and West Tennessee so as to enable you to draw Major-General Lee to the southern portion of your department."

The Federal forces were closing in from different

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxi, part iii, p. 489.

directions; General William Sooy Smith was reported to be coming from the direction of Nashville and Columbia; General A. J. Smith from Columbus, Ky., and General Grierson from the direction of Memphis were moving upon Forrest, and Brigadier-General Crook was coming from Huntsville. The column from Corinth had moved as far as Purdy and was on the road to Jacks Creek. Those coming from the northward were as far south as Trenton and McLemoresville by the 22d, and scouts reported a cavalry force two thousand strong divided between Somerville and Bolivar, while the infantry was still numerously posted on the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. General Grierson concentrated nearly all of his command at La Grange, a favorable point for heading off Forrest or for throwing troops up and down the railroad.

Colonel Richardson, who had been stationed at Brownsville, twenty-eight miles northwest of Jackson, had recruited his force to one thousand men, and was ordered on the 22d of December to put this little brigade in motion southward and cross the Hatchie at Estenaula, eighteen miles west of Jackson, which was accomplished on the 24th. Very few of his men had ever been under fire and only three hundred were armed. Soon after crossing the river the command came in collision with the advance of the Seventh Illinois Cavalry, five hundred strong, under Colonel Prince. Meantime Neely's Fourteenth Tennessee Cavalry and Lieutenant-Colonel D. M. Wisdom, with about one hundred and fifty of Colonel J. E. Forrest's old regiment, came to Richardson's support, and in the animated skirmish which ensued the Confederates were at first scattered in the face of well-trained and well-handled troops, but rallied and held their ground. After nightfall the Federals withdrew.

In preparing to leave West Tennessee Forrest had

subdivided his forces as follows: The first command under Colonel Richardson, the second under Lieutenant-Colonel D. M. Wisdom, and the third under Colonel Tyree H. Bell. The latter moved out from Jackson with two pieces of artillery, fifty wagons, loaded with valuable supplies, and several hundred head of cattle and hogs. Wisdom came up with Richardson in time to take active part in the fighting of the day, the first on the move southward. During the day he detached eighty men under Lieutenants H. A. Tyler and John O. Morris to check the advance of Federal flankers. A charge and hand-to-hand fight ensued. Lieutenant Morris met a Federal cavalryman in the charge, and both fired and fell mortally wounded. It was bloody work for a few minutes, and the assailants seemed to have the advantage. After this the Federals extended their main lines, and after nightfall on that Christmas eve Wisdom fell back in the direction of the main command with Major Philip Allin, commanding McDonald's battalion, covering the movement.

General Forrest with his staff and escort turned southward at 6 P. M. on the 24th and brought up the rear. Colonel Bell was occupied all that night and until midday of the 25th in crossing the river with his train and cattle. He had only one small, frail ferry-boat at his command, and this was so weak that it was once capsized with the loss of one man, two horses, and a wagon-load of supplies. Forrest's scouts reported heavy Federal forces at Somerville, Bolivar, Middleburg, La Grange, and other points. He was evidently expected to return by the way he had entered West Tennessee. Colonel Prince, with the Seventh Illinois regiment, had advanced to within four and a half miles of Estenaula, where he was attacked by Richardson and Wisdom, who were pressed back three miles to Slough Bridge, but there made the successful

stand already mentioned. In his report he says: "At this point we were unable to drive them farther; we were, however, able to hold our ground without difficulty, and did so until 8 P. M."

Later in the night Prince was again attacked, this time by Forrest's escort, sixty men present, under command of Lieutenant Nathan Boone, who charged through a corn-field, making noise enough for a brigade. Richardson's command was ordered to the support but was not needed that night. The Federals, believing that the assailants were supported by a large force, fell back and continued the march to Somerville, reaching there about daylight the next morning. Forrest had now crossed his trains and entire command over Hatchie River. In front of him was Wolf River, a sluggish stream rising eastward and emptying into the Mississippi River at Memphis, and a little farther on was the well-guarded Memphis and Charleston Railroad. It would be as perilous to march up toward the headwaters of these two swollen streams as to go nearer Memphis. All the bridges on Wolf River were supposed to be burned, and the fords, if any at that season of the year, were closely guarded. Three trains at La Grange had steam up in their engines ready at short notice to throw troops east or west on the railroad at any point required.

Before General Forrest left Jackson he had received word from Colonel Thomas H. Logwood, who had ventured within the lines north of Memphis on recruiting service, that the bridge over Wolf River, near Lafayette, thirty-one miles east of Memphis, had been set on fire but only partly burned, and that it could be easily repaired. The general determined upon this as the point of exit. Colonel Bell was selected to advance with three hundred men and put the bridge in condition for the passage of troops and trains when

these should arrive. A small detachment of Federal troops who had just arrived on the southern side were driven off early on the morning of the 27th, and in a few hours the bridge was ready for the main command to pass.

Richardson's brigade, as his command was now designated, was somewhat increased by volunteer recruits after crossing the Hatchie River, and on the afternoon of the 25th advanced upon Whiteville, where the men were entertained that night by the citizens. Early on the morning of the 26th the march was resumed in the direction of Somerville. Five miles from that place a Federal advance-guard was encountered. Richardson had only three hundred armed men, but made a show of fight and a display of his unarmed levies, creating the impression that he had a large effective force. The situation was critical for Richardson for some time, but Forrest, who was moving on the road from Estenaula direct to Somerville, with his escort and McDonald's battalion, heard the firing and came to the rescue. Leading a charge, he forced the Federals back, and the pursuit was continued for some miles. Several Confederates were killed and wounded, among the number three of Forrest's escort, including Sergeant A. H. Boone, brother of Lieutenant Boone. The Federals lost, according to Forrest's report, eight or ten killed and wounded and thirty prisoners, and a train of six wagons loaded with subsistence and ammunition; also an ambulance and some horses and mules.

Colonel Prince in his report says: "The enemy having gained our rear we were compelled to retire, and, owing to the broken character of the ground, in some disorder. The loss the enemy sustained in killed and wounded must have exceeded our entire loss, which will not exceed forty killed, wounded, and

missing." The way was now open to the repaired bridge at Lafayette. Colonel Faulkner, accompanied by Major Strange, had been sent to make a feint on Memphis with directions to escape toward Hernando, Miss., if hard pressed, and a force of two hundred men was thrown on the left of Lafayette to create the impression that an escape would be attempted between that place and Moscow. A detachment was sent south of the river to tear up and obstruct the railroad two miles east and two miles west of the crossing-place.

All was ready by 4 P. M. on the 27th, and Forrest's main command, with artillery, wagons, recruits, and stock began passing over Wolf River. This was rapidly and safely accomplished under the general's personal supervision; yet everything was still at stake. A strong, bold dash of Federal cavalry might scatter the trains and stock and unarmed men to the woods and swamps, and leave but few to make their way south of the Tallahatchie. Once across, the unarmed men, with trains and cattle, were ordered to take the road to Holly Springs by way of Mount Pleasant, and make an all-night march. To cover this movement Forrest threw out a detachment eastward upon Moscow, with orders to fall back if hard pressed. At the same time he moved in the opposite direction with his escort—three hundred armed men and Morton's two pieces of artillery. Two miles out from the hamlet he met and drove back an advance of Federal cavalry. Here his scouts came up from Lafayette and Moscow and reported the movement of cavalry and infantry in force from that direction.

The scouts were reenforced and sent back to open as hot a skirmish as possible, in order to divert attention from the train escaping southward. This answered the purpose, but the enemy overtook Forrest

near Colliersville, twenty-five miles east of Memphis, and a noisy skirmish ensued. Some prisoners were taken on both sides. Among others General Forrest had the misfortune to lose his chief engineer, Captain John G. Mann, who made himself useful, however, by intimating that General Stephen D. Lee was near by with his entire cavalry force. This seemed so plausible after the demonstration that Lee had made upon Saulsbury on the 4th of December with McCulloch's and Ross's brigades, that the Federal commander withdrew to Lafayette and remained there for the rest of the night. The Federal forces at Colliersville were within their fortifications; rain, which had been falling for twelve hours, suddenly ceased, and a strong, cold wind sprang up from the northwest. The priceless train was well on its way to Holly Springs, and before midnight Forrest headed his small command in that direction, and by daylight of the 28th was in Mount Pleasant after a day and night of continuous work, marching and fighting. He was now beyond the danger of immediate pursuit, and the command proceeded by easy marches across the country to Como, Panola County, Miss.

On the 28th he was met by General Chalmers with his command, to aid, if necessary, in covering the return. On the same day he proceeded to Holly Springs and reported to General Stephen D. Lee that he had returned safely with the greater portion of his troops, regretting very much that he had to leave so early. Colonel Faulkner with his regiment, and Major Strange of Forrest's staff, who made the flank movement on Memphis, arrived in Como on the first day of January without the loss of a man on the perilous adventure. The weather was colder than had been known for many years, and the troops, having no tents, were scattered around to find shelter in the vacant

houses of the village and in the cabins on the neighboring plantations.

Forrest foresaw the difficulty of reorganizing about three thousand fresh troops, including fragments of sixteen different commands, and wrote to the Government at Richmond that he could see no way of making these troops effective except by an order from the War Department annulling all authority previously given to raise troops, accompanied with the order to consolidate into full companies and regiments all the troops in West Tennessee and north Mississippi. He added: "By adopting this method I can get six full regiments of cavalry, or about four thousand men; the remainder would have to be conscripted. I think with this cavalry organized, I can conscript ten thousand men and place them in the service." The Secretary of War acceded to these suggestions, and on the 24th of January, 1864, issued orders accordingly. It was a coincidence that the day Forrest entered West Tennessee, the 4th of December, 1863, his commission as major-general was issued at Richmond, although he was unaware of his promotion to that grade until after his return to Mississippi.

It can be briefly stated of this last expedition that he entered West Tennessee at Saulsbury on the 4th of December with five hundred effective men, two guns, and five ordnance wagons, and recrossed the Memphis and Charleston Railroad near Lafayette (now Rossville) on the 27th with thirty-five hundred well-mounted men and his artillery, forty well-loaded wagons drawn by stout teams, two hundred beef cattle, and three hundred hogs. Large forces, estimated all the way from ten to twenty thousand strong, were in motion to cut off his retreat, and had he remained a few days longer the destruction of his command would have been inevitable. His escort and

other veterans were devoted to him, and he was ably sustained in all his efforts by Major J. P. Strange, Adjutant-General Captain Charles W. Anderson, A. D. C., and Major G. V. Rambaut, A. C. S., of his staff, as well as his young son, Willie M. Forrest, who acted as aide and afterward became captain on his father's staff. Many of the men just from home were not even supplied with blankets, but endured the hardships, privations, and exposure encountered in marching one hundred and forty miles with the utmost patience and fortitude.

Upon General Forrest's return to north Mississippi he learned that General Joseph E. Johnston had been relieved from duty as commander of the department by President Davis, and succeeded by Lieutenant-General Polk. He telegraphed to the latter the results of his expedition, and in reply was informed of his promotion and that he would be assigned to a district. On the 15th of January, leaving General Chalmers in command, he reported to General Polk's headquarters at Jackson, Miss., and was there given command of a district, designated as "Forrest's Cavalry Department." This included all the cavalry in West Tennessee and in north Mississippi as far as the southern boundaries of Monroe, Chickasaw, Calhoun, Yalobusha, and Tallahatchie, and parts of Sunflower and Bolivar counties lying north of a line drawn from the southern corner of Tallahatchie and extending to Prentiss on the Mississippi. In this field he found ample use for all his energies and resources, and was even called upon at times to take part in other departments, such were the exigencies and desperate straits of the Confederacy. At Jackson he obtained arms and ammunition, and promptly returned to prepare for active operations.

But he was confronted by many annoyances and

difficulties. The troops brought back from West Tennessee were mostly raw and in the habit of roaming around at will, and fighting independently. They were brave enough, but unused to strict military discipline, as they were far from the armies in the field, and from any recognized headquarters or authority. Then there were officers and men who had aspirations, and were not easily satisfied. Many of the men straggled off homeward, but were usually pursued and brought back promptly. The entire command, however, raw recruits and veterans, soon felt the iron hand and magic presence of Forrest. When he was a martinet, if at all, it was for the good of the service, and when not compelled to be severe he was the kind-hearted, gentle commander who could be approached easily by a private soldier. It is a matter of doubt whether the conventionalities and methods imparted by a West Point education would have made him a more effective leader in the field, but he would have started out with better ideas of discipline and the science of war, and would have more easily obtained recognition in high quarters.

Four small brigades were organized: The First, under General R. V. Richardson, all from West Tennessee, fifteen hundred strong.

Second, including Missouri, Texas, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas troops, commanded by Colonel Robert McCulloch, sixteen hundred strong.

Third, Tennessee troops under command of Colonel Tyree H. Bell, two thousand strong; and the

Fourth, composed of Tennessee and Mississippi troops under command of Colonel Jeffrey E. Forrest, one thousand strong.

On the 25th day of January, 1864, General Forrest issued three orders: (1) Announcing the limits of his command; (2) his staff, and (3) the provisional or-

ganization of batteries, regiments, and brigades. McCulloch's and Forrest's brigades were organized as a division under Brigadier-General James R. Chalmers.

Major-General Forrest established his headquarters at Oxford as a more central position for watching movements both from Memphis and Vicksburg. His command was poorly clothed and armed, and much discontent prevailed. Nineteen men who deserted in a body were captured, brought back to Oxford, and ordered to be shot by the finding of a court martial. The prisoners were blindfolded on their coffins, with a firing squad in front ready for the word "Fire!" Leading citizens of the town had made an appeal to General Forrest, and at the last moment he granted a reprieve. That he fully intended to have these men shot there can hardly be a doubt, but the pleas of the clergy and ladies afforded him a pretext for holding up the sentence. The incident created a profound impression and there was little more desertion after that.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL WILLIAM SOOY SMITH'S DEFEAT.

Major-General W. T. Sherman, a master spirit of the war, resolved early in 1864 to break up the useless line of railroad from Memphis to Corinth and thence southward to Meridian, and in an order dated Memphis, January 27, 1864, he placed all the cavalry of the Department of Tennessee under the command of General William Sooy Smith. He estimated that this force would be full seven thousand men, and superior and better in all respects than the combined cavalry of the enemy in the State of Mississippi. Outlining his plan, he says: "I will in person start for Vicksburg to-day, and with four divisions of infantry, artillery, and cavalry move out for Jackson, Brandon, and Meridian, aiming to reach the latter place by February 10th. General Banks will feign on Pascagoula and General Logan on Rome. I want you with your cavalry to move from Collierville on Pontotoc and Okolona; thence sweeping down near the Mobile and Ohio Railroad disable that road as much as possible, consume or destroy the resources of the enemy, break up the connections with Columbus, Miss., and *finally reach me* at or near Meridian as near the date I have mentioned as possible. . . . You have the best and most experienced troops in the service, and they will do anything that is possible. I will send up from Haynes Bluff an expedition of gunboats and transports combined to feel up the Yazoo as far as the

present stage of water will permit. This will disconcert the enemy. My movement on Jackson will also divide the enemy so that by no combination can he reach you with but a part of his force." General Sherman went on to say: "I wish you to attack any force you meet and follow them southward, but in no event be drawn into the forks of the streams that make up the Yazoo, nor over into Alabama. Do not let the enemy draw you into minor affairs, but look solely to the greater object: to destroy his communications from Okolona to Meridian and thence eastward to Selma. From Okolona south you will find abundance of forage collected along the railroad, and the farms have standing corn in the fields. Take liberally of all these, as well as horses, mules, cattle, etc. As a rule, respect dwellings and families as something too sacred to be disturbed by soldiers, but mills, barns, sheds, stables, and such like things use for the benefit and convenience of your command. If convenient send into Columbus and destroy all machinery there and the bridge across the Tombigbee, which enables the enemy to draw supplies from the east side of the valley; but this is not of sufficient importance to delay your movements. Try and communicate with me by scouts and spies from the time you reach Pontotoc. Avoid any large force of infantry, leaving them to me. We have talked over this matter so much that the above covers all points not provided for in my orders of to-day."* General Grant was freely consulted, and seems to have shared with General Sherman the thought and hope that the movement might be continued to Selma and even to Mobile.

General Sherman's aim was to go to Meridian and to have General Smith's picked command meet him

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 181–184.

there. This was all set forth in various orders and confidential communications. The general at least was frank, and gave the subordinate commander to understand that "war was hell," and that in the enemy's country they could help themselves to the necessaries of life and something over. All the commands were to go in light marching order; and in one order General Sherman said: "Do not hesitate to take any kind of provisions or fire-wood, for the enemy must not only pay for damages inflicted on our commerce, but for the expenses incurred in the suppression." This related to people living on the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers. General Forrest, of course, could have no accurate idea as to the details of all these well-matured plans. The foregoing extracts and condensations of orders as published officially in the Rebellion Records give some idea of the situation to be confronted by his command.

Taking it for granted that Smith would start on time, General Sherman moved out from Vicksburg on the 3d of February with twenty thousand men and artillery in proportion, divided into two columns which marched in parallel lines, and meeting with little effective resistance, reached Meridian on the 14th, and remained in that section of the country until the 20th of the month. General Smith had been ordered to take the aggressive from Memphis on or before the 1st of February. He moved to Collierville, twenty-five miles eastward, and there, waiting for Waring's brigade, which was marching slowly through from Columbus, Ky., remained several days. Waring's troops had been retarded by heavy rains and swollen streams, and upon arrival at Collierville were held two or three days to recuperate and have their horses shod. Hence the entire command was not ready to start until the 11th of February. It was seven thousand strong, equipped

in light marching order and armed with Colt repeating rifles, modern carbines, and army revolvers. Twenty pieces of artillery accompanied the expedition. It was expected by General Sherman that Forrest would be easily brushed away, and that the march to Meridian, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles, could be made by the 10th of February. The day after that date General Smith made the start from Collierville. As late as February 28th General Sherman was ignorant of General Smith's movements, for having returned to Vicksburg he issued on that date Special Field Orders No. 22, in which he said (Sec. I): "The army in the field now at Canton will remain there until about March 3d to hear from and assist, if necessary, the cavalry expedition under command of Brigadier-General William Sooy Smith, which should have left Memphis February 2d at farthest but did not until about the 11th. If heard from General McPherson with his corps will await his arrival, or until he can communicate with him and order General Smith to the vicinity of Big Black Bridge to await further orders, or to act offensively should a cavalry force appear this side of Pearl River. . . . (Sec. III:) Should General McPherson hear of the safety of the cavalry command referred to, or hear no tidings at all of it, on or before the 3d next, he will resume his former command at Vicksburg."

On the 7th of February General Polk notified Forrest that General Sherman was leading a column from Vicksburg toward Jackson, Miss., and that an expedition had been sent up the Yazoo River. Colonel Jeffrey Forrest was sent to Grenada with the Fourth Brigade, one thousand strong, and fit for duty. About the same time General Forrest learned that a large cavalry force was soon to leave Memphis, and realizing at once that these two movements had a common purpose and

objective point, disposed his forces as best he could to meet the emergency in his immediate front. General Chalmers, already south of the Tallahatchie, was ordered to guard the crossings of that river; McCulloch was stationed at Panola; Bell at Belmont; Richardson at Wyatt and Toby-Tubby Ferry, and McGuirk at Abbeville. On the evening of the 11th, Captain Thomas Henderson, chief of scouts, reported the advance of a large Federal force toward Holly Springs by the Germantown and Byhalia roads. General Chalmers was ordered to concentrate at Oxford, which was accomplished after heavy skirmishing at Wyatt and Abbeville. But the initial movements of General Sooy Smith were mere feints of General McMillin's infantry brigade temporarily attached to the command.*

McMillin had marched to Hernando, directly south of Memphis, on the 7th, then on the 9th moved on Senatobia, and after that had daily skirmishes with Forrest's forces on outpost duty until the 13th, when he reached Wyatt on the Tallahatchie. General Smith, after he left Collierville on the 11th, moved upon that point as if intending to force a crossing there, and, when at a convenient distance, suddenly turned his cavalry column toward New Albany, crossed there on the 16th and 17th, and headed directly for the rich prairie region around Okolona on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. General Chalmers was ordered to keep on the right flank of the enemy, and on the afternoon of the 14th left Oxford for Houston, forty-five miles distant. Colonel Jeffrey Forrest was ordered to march the Fourth Brigade from Grenada to West Point on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and establish a line of

* General William Sooy Smith's report, Serial 57, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 256, Rebellion Records.

communication by couriers with General Chalmers at Houston.

General Forrest, with Bell's brigade, his artillery and escort, left Oxford on the 14th for Grenada, and remaining there only a short time, pushed on rapidly to Starkville, twenty-five miles west of Columbus; thence on the 18th he communicated with General Chalmers, who joined him the next day. Colonel Jeffrey Forrest engaged the Federal column on the road to Aberdeen, a few miles north of Prairie Station, and was pushed back toward West Point on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad in a series of light skirmishes. This was a rainy season; all the streams were out of their banks, and the commands on both sides found it difficult to march rapidly across the country. Colonel Barteau, in command of Bell's brigade, the general being sick, was detached on the morning of the 20th to cross the Tombigbee at Columbus, and repel any attempts the Federals might make to cross at Aberdeen and move down on the east bank. He found that the Federals were massed as far southward as West Point, and took a position at Waverly, whence he might recross and strike the enemy in the flank.

General Forrest left Starkville at daybreak on the 20th with McCulloch's brigade and six hundred of Richardson's commanded by Colonel Neely, his artillery, staff, and escort, and marched as rapidly as possible to the support of Colonel Jeffrey Forrest, who was still skirmishing and falling back. At 2 P. M. he reached the Sook-a-Toncha, a branch of the Okatibbee, which could only be crossed by a bridge about thirty yards in length, four miles west of West Point. The stream was deep and sluggish and the bridge was approached over a long, narrow, and weak causeway. Forrest, however, pushed through and beyond West Point, and found Jeffrey Forrest engaged

with the Federals, the latter being in force and well in line of battle on the prairie. Forrest was hoping for General S. D. Lee to arrive, and reluctantly fell back behind the creek again. He was not ready to fight, and hoped to draw the enemy into a pocket formed by the confluence of the Tombigbee, a navigable river, and several smaller streams. This gave the Federals opportunity to burn much more property, which included cotton-gins, cotton bales, granaries, stacks of corn and fodder, and other property.

The Federal commander had given orders to respect private property and claimed afterward that this was done. But in the rush of such a movement in a region of Confederate sympathizers and facing hostile forces of unknown strength, there was little time for discrimination, and when the torch was once applied the flames swept away public and private property alike. General Forrest placed his forces back of the bridge mentioned, and led McCulloch's brigade four miles up the creek, where a small party of Federals had crossed and it was supposed a flank movement was being made. A few of the Union troops were killed, and twenty-three captured. Next morning, the 21st, the bridge was again crossed and a heavy skirmish opened, which lasted until noon, when the Federals fell back precipitately without apparent cause. Forrest with his escort and one hundred of Faulkner's Kentuckians dashed to the front, and found the enemy in full retreat. Ordering Forrest's and McCulloch's brigades forward, and leaving word for General Chalmers to guard the crossings and bridges up the stream to prevent any possible flank movement, he continued the pursuit, and was soon sharply engaged.

Five miles north of West Point the Federals made a strong stand at the mouth of a lane, and charged the Confederate advance. Forrest led a successful counter-

charge, and in close quarters here killed a Federal trooper with his own hand. The main line of the Federals was in a heavy wood near by, and supposed to be four thousand strong. Forrest dismounted about one thousand of his men and moved them forward as infantry. The Federals fought vigorously but continued to fall back until they reached a strong position behind a picket fence half a mile long; a regiment was thrown around to make a flank movement on the right, a charge was made in front, and after stubborn resistance the Federals again withdrew. Their column was encumbered in various ways, including a train of loose and pack animals and the care of about three thousand negroes who, mounted on mules, had flocked from the plantations to the Union standard. The ground was soaked with water, and the roads cut all to pieces by the artillery, wagons, and horses. Forrest's men and horses were jaded and hungry, but were in lighter marching order than General Smith's command, and could move with greater celerity. There was a little more fighting in the afternoon, and Forrest's losses that day were considerable. Bell's brigade, commanded by Colonel Barteau, had crossed back to the west bank of the Tombigbee, near Waverly, and kept between the Federal column and the river as far as Egypt Station, on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and there rested for the night.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 22d, McCulloch's and Jeffrey Forrest's brigades were once more moving toward Okolona, fourteen miles distant. Colonel Forrest was directed to take a left-hand road when within nine miles of Okolona, and throw his brigade over on the Pontotoc road and cut off retreat in that direction if possible. The general with his staff and escort rode directly to the front. Barteau, as mentioned, had kept well to the Federal right the day be-

fore, but when morning dawned he found himself in an isolated and perilous position. The Federals on reaching Okolona prepared to close in on him. Barteau deployed his skirmishers and brigade to advantage and moved up as if to make an attack. While he was thus maneuvering, and General Grierson was reconnoitering on his flanks to ascertain the strength of the brigade and what might be back of it, General Forrest came up with his small force and joined Barteau in a charge on a weak place in Grierson's lines. McCulloch's brigade was seen coming up from the south, and the Federals resumed their retreat in great disorder on the Pontotoc road. The losses on both sides in this brief affair were light compared with the numbers engaged.

The pursuit was kept up with great energy, and a number of fugitives who fell behind were killed or captured, and five pieces of artillery and their caissons were abandoned with their horses dead or helpless in the ditches. Speaking of this retreat from Okolona, Lieutenant I. W. Curtis, of the First Illinois Light Artillery, says in his report: "We had not proceeded very far from Okolona when we were unexpectedly surprised by the presence of flying cavalry on both sides of us. They were in perfect confusion, some hallooing, 'Go ahead, or we will be killed!' while some few showed a willingness to fight. After several unsuccessful attempts to form my battery, I gave it up and marched as best I could until I received an order for me to try and save the artillery by marching through the fields to the right. I proceeded to comply with orders. After crossing some two or three almost impassable ditches, and my horses being nearly exhausted, I came to another ditch some six feet deep. I managed to get one gun over safely by the men dismounting and taking it over by hand, and one other,

which by the time we got it over was broken, so that we had to leave it. I ordered them to cut the horses loose, to cut the gearing, and to go ahead with the led horses."*

The Federals made no halt until they reached a point about five miles west of Okolona. Here Colonel Waring's brigade was ordered to make a stand in conjunction with artillery, and hold his ground until the demoralized cavalry could pass through, and, if possible, be reorganized in the rear. Colonel Waring said: "I formed my brigade in line with skirmishers far out on each flank, and remained until the Third Brigade had passed through portions of it in such confusion as to endanger the *morale* of my command." †

Another stand was made about a mile distant and held for a short time by four regiments, but only to be forced back. General Smith was fully aware of the gravity of his environments, and made a determined stand in a position of great natural strength at a place known as "Iveys Hill," near Prairie Mound, seven miles out from Okolona. This was beyond the point where the road passes from the prairie to the hill country, and on a ridge easily defended. Here the general massed his artillery and threw up temporary breastworks of rails and logs between and on the flanks of the various buildings usually found on a large plantation. This position was not easily approached from the east except by a long, narrow road. When General Forrest came up he ordered Jeffrey Forrest's brigade to form on the right of the road in columns of fours, and McCulloch's brigade to form in like manner on the left; both to change formation into line when within three hundred yards of the position to be

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 301, 302.
† Ibid., p. 268.

assaulted, and this was done with the precision of veterans. Both brigades did not number twelve hundred men. Colonel Forrest, deploying Duff's Mississippians and his own regiment of Tennesseeans and Alabamians under Lieutenant-Colonel Wisdom, moved to the onset at equal pace with McCulloch's brigade and carried the first line, but back of that was another in an even better position. Again the charge sounded, and the Confederate lines advanced under a galling fire, and many fell killed or mortally wounded.

Here the intrepid young Colonel Jeffrey Forrest, in front of his command, was shot through the neck within fifty yards of the Federal lines, and died almost instantly. His men and others faltered as they saw their leader fall. General Forrest, hearing of his great loss, rushed to the spot, and, springing from his horse, fell down on his knees by the side of his dead young brother, his favorite, his Benjamin, calling him by name in the most endearing and pathetic tones. But the spirit had fled, and no answer came. The Confederates near by ceased firing and stood back in awe and sorrow, and the Federals, realizing that something unusual had happened, withheld their volleys for a moment. Tears came to the eyes of grimy soldiers, and stifled sobs of sympathy welled up in their throats. Yet it was soon over. Kissing his dead brother passionately, the strong man was himself again. Rising to his feet, he requested his adjutant-general, Major Strange, to care for the body, mounted his horse, and looking around at his staff and escort, he called upon his bugler, in a loud, strong voice, to sound the charge.

In the last engagement Lieutenant-Colonel James A. Barksdale, of the Fifth Mississippi Cavalry, fell mortally wounded, a loss keenly felt by his regiment and the command at large. Colonel McCulloch was severely wounded in the hand, but did not at once re-

linquish his place at the front. Bell's brigade came up, and Colonel Duckworth assumed command of Jeffrey Forrest's brigade.

Led by General Forrest the entire command made an impetuous charge, before which the Federal lines gave way. The general acted so rashly that members of his staff feared he had given up to his emotions at the loss of his brother, and was thus rushing forward to throw his life away. The troops, however, went into the charge in flank and in front with their wonted spirit, and soon found that General Smith was continuing his retreat. Forrest and his escort, about sixty in number, still kept in the lead, and suddenly dashed into the rear-guard of about five hundred men, thrown across the road, and were at once surrounded and engaged in a bloody hand-to-hand fight. In a few moments McCulloch's small brigade came upon the scene, but the men hesitated about going into such a trap. The colonel had been wounded about the time Jeffrey Forrest fell. Raising his wounded, dripping hand above his head, he called upon the Missourians to follow him, and they were soon mingling in the *mêlée*, and succeeded in rescuing their general and his few followers. It was said that General Forrest killed or disabled three of his assailants in this short but furious fight, one of them being in the act of shooting Lieutenant Thomas D. Tate, who was in command of the escort.

The Federal rear-guard moved on about a mile, and made another stand. Approaching this position, General Forrest and his chief surgeon, J. B. Cowan, drew a heavy fire from small arms and artillery, and the general's horse fell dead. Forrest declined to take Doctor Cowan's horse, but called up a member of his escort, took his horse, and told the man he could go to the rear. The main command came up, and a few

moments later a sharp fight took place, in which the general lost the second horse. After that he sent back for his famous war-horse, "King Philip," and continued to lead his men until dark.* Late in the day the Federals made a final stand, formed into line of battle, and charged down on the Confederates in fine style. Forrest was at the front with about three hundred men, and was in great peril. Falling back behind a deep gully, he repelled two charges, but the third broke through his lines. The Confederates were nearly out of ammunition for their guns, and resorted to the use of their revolvers. In the midst of a hand-to-hand fight, Lieutenant-Colonel McCulloch came up in command of McCulloch's brigade, the colonel having been wounded a second time. This last and most gallant charge was met and driven back. A number of Federals were killed, including an officer said to be an aide-de-camp to General Grierson, whose conspicuous bravery so excited the admiration of his foes that General Forrest directed special attention to be paid to his body. This was the end of the real fighting of that eventful day and brief campaign. General Smith made haste to get back across the Tallahatchie River.

By 8 P. M. Forrest's men were well closed up, and about that time General Gholson reached the field with a brigade of seven hundred Mississippi State troops.

* This remarkable horse, a superb iron-gray, was then twelve years old, and had seen hard service within the Confederate lines at the siege of Vicksburg. Coming out very thin he was well cared for, and afterward presented to General Forrest by the citizens of Columbus, Miss. When in battle he seemed to catch the spirit of his master, would lay back his ears, rush at the enemy, and snap his teeth with a violent show of temper. He was wounded that day near Iveys Farm, but survived the war and was tenderly cared for as long as he lived. All the men of Forrest's command knew "King Philip" as well as they knew the general.

On the morning of the 3d he was ordered to take up the pursuit, which, of course, he could not do very effectively; but his men were fresh, and kept on after the fleeing column as far north as the Tallahatchie, which was crossed by General Smith on the 23d, at New Albany, twenty-five miles east of Oxford, and he moved back to Memphis without further serious molestation. General Gholson picked up about fifty stragglers and some abandoned property on the road. Independent scouts, who happened to be in the neighborhood, fired several times on General Smith's column, south of the Tallahatchie, creating the impression that Forrest was making flank movements, and thus hastening the retreat across the river.

Colonel Waring, in his account of the affair, says: "The retreat to Memphis was a very disheartening and almost panic-stricken flight, in the greatest disorder and confusion, and through a most difficult country. The First Brigade reached its camping ground five days after the engagement, with the loss of all its heart and spirit, and nearly fifteen hundred fine cavalry horses. The expedition filled every man connected with it with burning shame, and it gave Forrest the most glorious achievement of his career."

The losses on both sides in the engagements of the 20th, 21st, and 22d were: Confederates, twenty-seven killed, ninety-seven wounded, and twenty missing; aggregate, one hundred and forty-four. Federal officers killed, two; men, fifty-two; officers wounded, sixteen; men, one hundred and sixty-three; officers captured and missing, two; men, one hundred and fifty-three; aggregate, three hundred and eighty-eight.*

Major-General Lee, with Major-General W. H. Jackson's division, had arrived at General Chalmers's

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 194–353.

headquarters, behind the Sook-a-Toncha, on the morning of the 22d, and becoming satisfied that the movement was baffled, fell back to Starkville. General Forrest, after giving orders for details to be made to press wagons and remove the wounded on both sides to hospitals in Okolona, left for Starkville with his staff and escort, reaching there on the 24th. On the 26th he was joined there by his entire force, including General Chalmers's division, and proceeded to Columbus to go into camp, and was occupied there some time reorganizing his command.

General Sherman returned from Meridian to Vicksburg without hearing of General Smith, and excoriated him in his reports, as well as in his Memoirs, for not leaving Memphis and reaching Meridian on time, although speaking of him as an accomplished gentleman and skilful engineer. Major-General Forrest, in a report to Lieutenant-General Polk, dated Starkville, Miss., February 26, 1864, says in part:

I am under many obligations for the ordnance stores and train sent to Gainesville. Am also gratified at being able to say that your wishes in regard to Generals Smith and Grierson are realized; at least to the extent of their defeat and utter rout. We met them on Sunday morning last (21st) at Ellis's bridge on Sook-a-Toncha Creek, three miles south of West Point, in front of which Colonel Forrest's brigade was posted to prevent the enemy from crossing. After a brisk engagement of an hour and a half the enemy retired toward West Point. It was not my intention to attack them or bring on a general engagement, but to develop their strength, position, and movements. I moved forward with my escort and a portion of Faulkner's Kentucky regiment and found the enemy had begun a rapid and systematic retreat, and being unwilling they should leave this section without a fight, ordered the advance of my columns. Will forward a detailed official report. It is sufficient for me to say here that with twen-

ty-five hundred men, the enemy, numbering from six thousand to seven thousand strong, were driven from West Point to within ten miles of Pontotoc in two days. All his efforts to check our advance failed, and his forces at last fled utterly defeated and demoralized, leaving six pieces of artillery, one hundred killed, over one hundred prisoners, and wounded estimated at three hundred or over. The seriously wounded—about fifty in number—fell into our hands. They took in their retreat every carriage, buggy, cart, and wagon along the road to remove their killed and wounded officers, and all their slightly wounded, according to reports of citizens, were moved in front with their pack-train. Among the killed are my brother, Colonel Jeffrey Forrest, commanding brigade; Lieutenant-Colonel Barksdale, commanding Colonel George's regiment, and several other officers, names not remembered.

It affords me pleasure to mention the fortitude and gallantry displayed by the troops engaged, especially the new troops from West Tennessee, who, considering their want of drill and discipline and experience, behaved handsomely, and the moral effect of their victory over the best cavalry in the Federal service will tell in their future operations, inspiring them with courage and confidence in their ability to whip them again. Considering the disparity in numbers, discipline, and drill, I consider it one of the most complete victories that has occurred during the war. After the enemy succeeded in reaching the hills between Okolona and Pontotoc their resistance was obstinate, compelling me to frequently dismount my advance to drive them from favorable positions. . . . About three hundred men of the Second Tennessee Cavalry, under Colonel Barteau, and the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry, under Colonel Duckworth, received the repeated charges of seven regiments in the open ground, finally driving them from the field, capturing three stands of colors and another piece of their artillery. A great deal of the fighting was almost hand to hand, and the only way I can account for our small loss is in the fact that we kept so close to them that the enemy overshot our men. Owing to the broken-down and

exhausted condition of our men and horses, and being almost out of ammunition, I was compelled to stop pursuit. Major-General Gholson arrived during Monday night (22d), and his command being comparatively fresh, continues the pursuit, and when last heard from was still driving the enemy, capturing horses and prisoners. The enemy had crossed the Tallahatchie River on the night of the 23d (Tuesday), burning the bridge behind them at New Albany, and retreating rapidly toward Memphis, with Gholson still in pursuit.

Respectfully, etc.,

N. B. FORREST, *Major-General.*

To Lieutenant-General POLK.*

In the course of a more elaborate report made at Columbus, Miss., March 8, 1864, General Forrest says: "The killed and wounded of the enemy who fell into our hands amount to over one hundred. We captured six pieces of artillery, three stands of colors, and one hundred and sixty-two prisoners. By pressing every horse, wagon, buggy, and carriage along the road, they were enabled to take off all their wounded, except those severely or mortally wounded; and it is a low estimate to place their loss in killed, wounded, and missing at eight hundred. My force in the fight did not exceed twenty-five hundred men, while that of the enemy was twenty-seven regiments of cavalry and mounted infantry, estimated at seven thousand."

He regretted the loss of some gallant officers, including his brother, Colonel J. E. Forrest, an officer who, for sobriety, ability, prudence, and bravery had no superior of his age, being only twenty-four years old. Special mention was made of different commands, and of his staff-officers, for endurance and courage. General Polk issued special orders dated Demopolis, Ala., March 3d, in which he congratulated

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 350, 351.

the officers and men of Major-General Lee and Major-General Forrest "upon the brilliant and successful campaign just closed," and Forrest issued a stirring address to the men, dated at Columbus, March 11th.

Under date of Memphis, February 28, 1864, Brigadier-General William Sooy Smith, chief of cavalry, reported to General Grant at Nashville, briefly as follows: "I penetrated to West Point, reaching that place on Sunday, the 21st inst. Burned two million bushels of corn and two thousand bales of Confederate cotton, brought out about three thousand horses and mules, and fifteen hundred negroes. Could not force my way through to Sherman. . . . I fought the rebels at four points severely, and skirmished with them as we retired, for sixty miles. We had the best of them at all points except at Okolona, where our loss was very severe, including a battery of small howitzers, which we drove into a ditch, and so disabled that we could not get it along. This whole trouble resulted from the bad conduct of a portion of McCrilli's brigade. I will write fully, and start back to Nashville about day after to-morrow." General Smith made a more specific and elaborate report, dated Nashville, March 4, 1864, which contains facts not previously stated by him. He said in part:

On December 28, 1863, I started from this city with the Second, Third, and Fourth Tennessee Cavalry regiments, Third and Fourth Kentucky Cavalry, and Twenty-eighth Mounted Infantry. . . . The object of these movements was to clear the country of the bands of guerrillas that infested it, and to watch any attempt that Forrest, who was then at Jackson, Tenn., might make to throw his force, or any portion of it, over into Middle Tennessee or Kentucky. . . . Upon reaching the Tennessee River, the command, then consisting of the Second, Third, and Fourth Tennessee Cavalry, Fifth Kentucky Cavalry,

Fourth United States Cavalry, and Seventy-second Indiana Mounted Infantry, was thrown across the river and moved toward Corinth, which point we reached on the 8th of January. Forrest had moved southward into Mississippi before my command reached the Tennessee River—urged to this step by the movement of the troops of the Sixteenth Army-corps upon him.

Orders had been issued to abandon the railroad from Memphis to Corinth, and I moved my command to Collierville (twenty-five miles east of Memphis) to await the arrival of Waring's brigade, which only reached Collierville on Monday, the 8th of February. . . . By great effort the whole command was prepared for the movement and put in motion on the 11th of February. Forrest had taken position behind the Tallahatchie River, determined to resist our crossing. I threw McMillin's brigade of infantry, temporarily assigned to my command, rapidly toward Panola from Memphis on the 8th of February, and on the 11th ordered it to move toward Wyatt, toward which point I directed the march of my whole cavalry force, until the impression was made that I intended forcing a crossing at that point, which I attacked with the brigade of infantry, and attracted the attention and forces of the enemy there while I threw my whole cavalry force around by way of New Albany, where I crossed the Tallahatchie without firing a shot, although delayed a day at the crossing of Tippah Creek, swollen by a freshet. We then moved rapidly on Pontotoc and Houston. Within ten miles of Houston we saw an outpost of State troops. These stampeded, leaving a portion of their arms. We forced our way over a corduroy road, strongly guarded—one mile long—to the crossing of the Houlka Swamp, three miles north of Houston. The roads crossing this road were held by the enemy in force. Our advance made an attack on the force on the road leading to Houston while the main body was moved rapidly eastward to Okolona, where a number of rebel officers and men on furlough were captured. A regiment was thrown forward by forced march to endeavor to seize ferry-boats on the Tombigbee, but none

were found. The next morning one brigade was moved to the support of the regiment and to threaten Columbus, while two brigades moved down the railroad toward West Point, throwing out strong detachments to make feints and watch the crossing of the Sook-a-Toncha on our right and destroy the roads as they went, together with the vast amount of corn that was collected in cribs near the railroad. They also destroyed all the Confederate cotton that was found. The brigade that went to Aberdeen did the same, and also destroyed a very extensive tannery, together with about two thousand hides. . . . I concentrated my command at Prairie Station—fifteen miles north of West Point—and moved on that place on the 20th of February. One mile north of the town we drove in a rebel brigade after a short, sharp fight. The whole command arrived near West Point at about 3 P. M., and careful reconnaissances were made of the Sook-a-Toncha Swamp on our right, the Okatibbee on our front, and the Tombigbee on our left. They were all found strongly held by the enemy, present in four brigades and to the number of about six or seven thousand, according to the best information that could be obtained.

Exaggerated reports of Forrest's strength reached me constantly, and it was reported that Lee was about to reenforce him with a portion, or the whole of his command. Columbus had been evacuated, and all the State troops that could be assembled from every quarter were drawn together at my front to hold the Okatibbee against me, while a heavy force was seen coming to my rear. About three thousand able-bodied negroes had taken up with us, mounted on as many horses and mules brought with them. We had also seven hundred pack-mules. All these encumbrances to be strongly guarded against the flank attacks constantly threatened. This absorbed about three thousand of my available force. There remained a little less than five thousand men who could be thrown into action. The enemy had every advantage of position. The ground was so obstructed that we must fight dismounted, and for this kind of fighting the enemy, being armed with Enfield

and Austrian rifles, was better prepared than our force, armed mainly with carbines. There was but one of my brigades that I could rely upon with full confidence. The conduct of the others on the march had been such as to indicate a lack of discipline and to create in my mind the most serious apprehensions as to what would be their conduct in action. Any reverse to my command would have been fatal. I was ten days late with my movement, owing to the delay of Waring's brigade in arriving from Columbus, and had every reason to believe that General Sherman, having accomplished the purpose of his expedition, had returned to Vicksburg. Under the circumstances I determined not to move my encumbered command into the trap set for me by the rebels. We had destroyed two million bushels of corn, two thousand bales of Confederate cotton, and thirty miles of railroad. We had captured about two hundred prisoners and three thousand horses and mules, and rescued as many negroes well fitted for our service. I therefore determined to move back and draw the enemy after me that I might select my own positions and fight with the advantages in our favor. In this I succeeded perfectly, disposing my forces behind every crest of a hill and in every skirt of timber that furnished us cover, inflicting heavy losses upon them at every attack, while our losses were uniformly light, until we reached Okolona, where, after the Fourth Regulars had driven one entire rebel brigade out of the town three times, a portion of McCrilli's brigade, sent to the support of the Fourth, stampeded at the yells of our own men charging and galloped back through and over everything, spreading confusion wherever they went and driving Perkins's battery of six small mountain howitzers off the road into a ditch, where the imperfect carriages they were mounted upon were all so wrecked that we could not get the battery along, and had to abandon it after spiking the guns, chopping the carriages to pieces, and destroying the ammunition. Organized forces were immediately thrown to the rear and the enemy handsomely repulsed. Skirmishing continued about ten miles, when we reached

a fine position at Iveys Farm. Here I deployed a line of dismounted men, consisting of four regiments. A battery was placed near the road where it could enfilade the column as it advanced. Just to the right of the battery the Fourth Missouri Cavalry (and six companies of the Seventh Indiana Cavalry) were formed and mounted for a saber charge, and the Third Tennessee Cavalry (mounted) was sent to the extreme right with orders to charge in flank when the troops made the direct charge in front.

While these dispositions were being made the enemy pressed our rear, that was well posted, very heavily, and were sorely handled. The rear-guard was at last called off rapidly and the rebel column let into the space prepared for them, when the battery opened upon them in very gallant style, and the dismounted troops poured volley after volley into them. They pressed their attack with great determination, but at last fell back. Just as they began to retire they were charged very successfully by the Fourth Missouri and Seventh Indiana in front and by the Third Tennessee in flank. This completely routed them, and they were driven from the field with heavy loss. It was reported that Colonel Forrest, brother to the general, commander of a brigade, and Colonel Barksdale fell, and McCulloch, another commander of a brigade, and Colonel Barteau were seriously wounded. Strong detachments were thrown out upon our flanks at every vulnerable point, and every attempt to cut our column by a flank attack was met and thwarted. Our march was so rapid that the enemy could not outstrip and intercept us, which they constantly endeavored to do. No heavy fighting occurred after we passed the Ivey Farm, although skirmishing continued as far as Pontotoc. I then moved back to Memphis with everything that we had captured, content with the very great injury we had inflicted upon them, and feeling that everything had been achieved that was at all practicable under the circumstances. Returning I drew the enemy after me and inflicted heavy losses upon them, and saved my command with all our captured stock and prisoners and rescued negroes with very trifling losses

except in stragglers captured. Attempting to cut through to Sherman, I would have lost my entire command, and, of course, could have rendered him no assistance. . . . Information since obtained fully justifies the decision to retire before Forrest's force from West Point. General Sherman's expeditionary force had withdrawn from Meridian before my arrival at West Point on a line that could not have been known to me. Forrest's force is ascertained to have been rather above than below my estimate. Chalmers was moving with two brigades to my rear, while Lee, with from three thousand to four thousand, was ordered up to join Forrest in my front. . . . The encumbrances which already overburdened me would have increased, and it was impossible to shake them off, and, involved in an exceedingly intricate and obstructed country, I would have been compelled to contend with a force numerically largely superior to my own; and looking back upon the movement I would in no way have been justifiable in moving at the time appointed without the whole force which I was ordered to take. Had I moved with the Second and Third Brigades only I would have had less than five thousand men instead of seven thousand, would have had the odds largely against me from the moment I dropped the infantry brigade and crossed the Tallahatchie River, and, meeting with disaster, would have been subjected to severe censure. The brigade moved from Columbus under orders not my own, and for its delay I am in no wise responsible. This much I feel constrained to write in the nature of a defense for the sake of my command, as it must participate in the mortification of a supposed failure, when we bear with us the consciousness of success and duty well performed. A full list of prisoners captured—about two hundred—is in course of preparation, and will be forwarded, etc.*

General Sherman, in forwarding this instructive and valuable report from Nashville to the adjutant-general at Washington on the 9th of April, 1864,

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, pp. 254, 260.

merely indorsed it as follows: "I have heretofore reported in this case, and could now only add that General Smith should have moved on time at any and every risk. His instructions (of January 27th) are as specific as could possibly have been made before the occurrence of the events."

Sherman never forgave Smith for his defeat. In his Memoirs, he says: "General Smith never regained my confidence, though I still regard him as a most accomplished gentleman and a skilful engineer. Since the close of the war he has appealed to me to relieve him of that censure, but I could not do it because it would falsify history." General Grant said: "General Sooy Smith was ordered to move about the 1st of February against Forrest, who was known to be southeast of Memphis with four thousand cavalry, composed of well-drilled, disciplined men, who, under so able a leader, were very effective. Smith's command was nearly double that of Forrest, but not equal man to man, for the lack of experience, such as Forrest's men had. The fact is, that troops that have fought a few battles and won, and followed up their victories, improve upon what they were before to an extent that can hardly be counted by percentage. The difference in result is often decisive victory instead of inglorious defeat. This same difference is often due to the way troops are officered, and for the particular kind of warfare which Forrest carried on the army could present no more effective officer than he was. Sherman had spent two weeks at Meridian waiting to hear from Sooy Smith, who had met Forrest, and, he hoped, had gained a decisive victory because of superiority of numbers. Hearing nothing, he started on his return trip to Vicksburg. There he learned that Smith did meet Forrest, but the result was decidedly in Forrest's favor." (Personal Memoirs U. S. Grant, vol. ii, page 110.)

CHAPTER XII.

THIRD RAID INTO WEST TENNESSEE.

FORREST remained at Columbus, Miss., no longer than was necessary to rest and equip his command. The men, flushed with success, were eager to follow him into any field. He was soon joined by General Buford, with three small regiments of Kentuckians transferred from the infantry and reduced by hard campaigns, exposure, and sickness to about seven hundred effective men, and only about a third of whom were mounted. Forrest's plan now was to make another move into West Tennessee, and extend it as far as Columbus and Paducah, Ky., give the men an opportunity to supply themselves with clothing and horses, and send out supplies. The unmounted Kentuckians gladly agreed to march back toward their homes.

Four small brigades were organized. The First, commanded by Colonel J. J. Neely; the Second, by Colonel Robert McCulloch; the Third, by Colonel A. P. Thompson, and the Fourth Brigade by General T. H. Bell. General Chalmers was assigned to the command of the First Division, composed of First and Second Brigades, in orders issued on the 7th of March. Meantime General Richardson had been sent to Grenada, and thence southward seventy-five miles, to cooperate with General Ross in an attack upon Yazoo City, which was a failure, although the Federals retreated after having accomplished their purpose of drawing

off a part of Forrest's command. Richardson returned to Grenada, was relieved from duty on the 12th, and his brigade joined the First Division, near Panola, where it had arrived by widely divergent roads two days previously.

The Federal commanders well knew that Forrest would soon aim another blow at some point upon or within their lines, and in the despatches passing at that period, expressed a variety of opinions as to where he would next appear. But he was a man of reticence, who kept his own counsels well, and only disclosed his plans to a chosen few until the hour came to mount. The entire command was set in motion on the 15th of March. Buford's division, composed of Thompson's and Bell's brigades, the Seventh Tennessee, and McDonald's battalion marched in the direction of Corinth, but when near there deflected to the left, and marched to Jackson. Faulkner's regiment, on the left, crossed the now abandoned railroad, and marched by way of Bolivar to Denmark. General Forrest reached Jackson, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, on the 20th, and on the 22d he moved on Trenton, with his escort and the Seventh Tennessee and Twelfth Kentucky regiments. Colonel Wilson, with five companies of the Sixteenth Tennessee, was left at Jackson to hold the place, and care for the disabled and dismounted men who could not accompany the expedition.

Colonel Duckworth was ordered on the 23d to move with the Seventh Tennessee, Faulkner's regiment, and McDonald's battalion, and capture Union City. Reaching there before daylight the next morning he found the place well fortified, and occupied by a force capable of prolonged resistance. Colonel Hawkins, of the Second Tennessee Federal Cavalry, who had been captured by Forrest in 1862, was in command. Duckworth closed in on the place as soon as it was light

enough, and skirmished sharply until ten o'clock, losing several men in killed and wounded. But, having no artillery, he realized that he could not storm the place without much loss of life. Drawing off his men, he resorted to one of Forrest's favorite methods of "preventing the further effusion of blood." He wrote a peremptory demand in the name of Forrest for the surrender of the garrison, stating that he had a large force, and would not be responsible for the consequences if obliged to take the stockade by assault. This was sent in by Captain Henry Livingstone, Adjutant Will Pope, of the Seventh Tennessee, and Lieutenant William McDonnell, of Henderson's scouts.

Hawkins refused to surrender, but wanted to see Forrest in person. He was allowed to come out of his lines, but was met by Colonel Duckworth, who told him sharply that the general would not confer with any one below his own rank, and eloquently advised him to surrender while he could, and enlarged upon the dire calamities that would befall the garrison if a capitulation was not agreed upon in five minutes. Meantime some of Duckworth's men mounted a black log on the forewheels of a common wagon, drawn by two mules, with an old box similarly paraded on other wheels in imitation of a caisson, and drove around in the bushes as if looking for a good position for artillery. This device was not without its influence. Hawkins weakened, and surrendered at eleven o'clock, when help was near at hand. General Brayman, with two thousand men, a battery, and mounted scouts on a train, was hurrying with all possible speed to the relief of this outpost, but was stopped at a burned bridge only six miles away, and there, hearing of the surrender, he returned to Columbus and thence to Cairo. In his report, he says:

"I heard with great pain and surprise that Colonel

Hawkins had surrendered at 11 A. M., and had, with his force, been removed, and his fortifications destroyed. The force of the enemy does not appear more than one-fourth the number reported (seven thousand), and without artillery. The number of men surrendered is probably five hundred, some seventy-five having escaped. All were armed and equipped; about three hundred mounted. A few mules, three wagons, and an inconsiderable amount of public property were lost and destroyed. I learn that Colonel Hawkins's command had been recently paid for over a year's service, and that the aggregate of individual loss on the part of the officers and soldiers will reach some $60,000."

Colonel Duckworth lost no time in removing such useful supplies as were found, burned what remained, and sent the prisoners southward. McDonald's battalion was moved on the road toward Memphis, and Duckworth started back to join the main command.

Forrest had advanced rapidly with his escort and a portion of Buford's division toward Paducah, and on nearing that point, threw forward detachments on the various approaches, and about 1.30 P. M., of the 25th, surprised and captured the Federal outpost, about fifty men, at "Eden" Hill. He then pressed forward rapidly, and at about 2 P. M. had driven in or captured all the pickets. The command was immediately thrown into position. General Buford, with part of the Kentucky brigade, consisting of the Third Kentucky, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. C. Holt, the Seventh Kentucky, commanded by Colonel Edward Crossland, and the Eighth Kentucky, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Shacklett, were immediately dismounted, and were advanced on the front and the extreme left, closing in on that side of the fort to feel the strength of the enemy. The Third Kentucky, Colonel Thompson's regiment, in command

of Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. C. Holt, occupied the extreme left of the line. General Forrest, with the balance of his command, was in person on the right, and, pressing up the river, drove everything before him into the fort and on the gunboats. In the meantime the Kentucky brigade had rushed forward under a terrific fire from the fort and two gunboats, and taken position under cover of houses in close range of the fort. At this time the entire city, except the fort, including United States Government stores and supplies, and a large number of mules, horses, and wagons, was in full possession of Forrest's troops. General Forrest, on the right, had burned the dry-dock, one steamboat, and many bales of cotton, and captured a great number of Government horses and wagons, and commissary and quartermaster supplies. From the covered position near the fort and river, the sharpshooters kept up a continuous and effective fire on the fort and gunboats for about half an hour. The fort was closely invested.

At this juncture, General Forrest sounded a truce, and sent in, under a flag, a note in his usual characteristic style, demanding the unconditional surrender of the garrison. Colonel S. G. Hicks, of the Fortieth Illinois Infantry, a gallant officer, was commandant of the post, and declined to surrender. Whereupon firing recommenced from the fort and two gunboats, which was replied to sharply by General Forrest's troops from their sheltered positions, firing at every head that appeared above the parapet, or on the gunboats, inflicting considerable loss on the Federals.

General Forrest had no artillery except two little mountain howitzers, commonly called in army parlance "bull pups," commanded by Major Upton, which were utterly useless in an engagement of this character except to make a noise. If General Forrest could have

had even his rifle battery with him on this occasion, the fate of Colonel Hicks would doubtless have been very different.

The fort was well garrisoned, besides having a wide, deep ditch around it with abatis work, which rendered it almost impregnable to an infantry charge unaided by artillery. It was not the purpose of General Forrest to attempt to storm it, as the consequent loss of life would not justify such a course. However, Colonel A. P. Thompson, who was in sight of his home, without orders to do so concluded to storm and capture the fort with his three small veteran Kentucky regiments. He ordered a charge, which, although ill-judged, was made in the most gallant style. The brave Kentuckians dashed forward to the ditch, which they found impassable without pontoons or ladders. This charge was met by a galling fire of grape, canister, shrapnel, and shell, as well as small arms from the fort and two gunboats, which caused the brigade to fall back with considerable loss. General Buford sent an order by his assistant inspector-general, Captain D. E. Myers, to Colonel Thompson, to fall back under cover of a line of houses, where his men could be protected. Captain Myers was directed to proceed to the right of the brigade, and down the line to the left, delivering the order to the colonels of the regiments, until he found Colonel Thompson. This he did, running the gantlet of the entire line, and did not receive a scratch. Colonel Thompson was with his old regiment (Third Kentucky) on the extreme left, and was killed just before this staff-officer reached him, having been struck by a shell or solid shot and literally blown to pieces, a large piece of his flesh having stuck on the shoulder of his aide, Lieutenant Mathews.

Thus, in sight of his home, the brave and gallant

Thompson gave up his life to the cause which he had espoused. Here occurred most of the casualties of the day. The brigade fell back, under terrific fire, to the next line of houses (Colonel Edward Crossland succeeding to the command of the brigade), where the fire was kept up for several hours and until all the captured Government property had been removed, and about eleven o'clock, General Forrest retired, and bivouacked a few miles from the scene of action. The Federal forces did not attempt to come out of the fort, or to follow. The main object of the expedition was, as claimed, accomplished.

In this connection, it is proper to note an incident of the fight at Paducah. While Colonel Thompson's brigade was so hotly engaged, Major Upton, not able to remain a looker-on while comrades were engaged, moved his two mountain howitzers to a slight prominence near the river, and commenced firing on the gunboats. General Buford, discovering this, and that one of the gunboats was backing out so as to get the range of the little battery, directed one of his staff-officers (Captain D. E. Myers) to order him to get away from there quick, but before this officer reached Major Upton, the gunboat, with a well-directed shell, blew away one of the little guns, killing and wounding two or three men. It required no order for Major Upton to retreat with the other gun. This attack with his little howitzers on the gunboats was one of the most daring episodes of the war, because it would have been a mere accident if any one of the gunboats could have been injured by the fire from these "pop-guns."

On March 26th, General Forrest, with his prisoners and captured property, retired to Mayfield, Ky., where the Kentucky soldiers who lived in that part of the State were furloughed, in order to visit their homes and improve their mounts and wardrobes, with instruc-

tions to report for duty on the 3d of April, at Trenton, Tenn. To their credit it is said that every man returned and reported for duty on time.

In a report to Lieutenant-General Polk, on the 27th of March, he says: "Left Jackson on the 23d; captured Union City on the 24th, with four hundred and fifty prisoners, among them Hawkins and most of his regiment, about two hundred horses and five hundred small arms, also took possession of Hickman, the enemy having passed it. I moved now with Buford's division direct from Jackson to Paducah in fifty hours; attacked it on the evening of the 26th, drove the enemy to their gunboats and forts; held the place for ten hours and could have held it longer, but found the smallpox raging and evacuated the place; captured many stores and horses, burned up sixty bales of cotton, one steamer, and the dry-dock, bringing out fifty prisoners. My loss at Union City and Paducah, as far as known, is twenty-five killed and wounded, among them Colonel Thompson, commanding Kentucky brigade, killed; Lieutenant-Colonel Lannom, Faulkner's regiment, wounded dangerously, and Colonel Crossland, of the Seventh Kentucky, and Lieutenant-Colonel Morton, of the Second Tennessee, slightly wounded. Have despatched Gholson at Tupelo to meet prisoners at Corinth and take them (five hundred) to you. I hold possession of all the country except posts on the river. Think if I can remain unmolested here fifteen days I will be able to add two thousand men to my command."*

Forrest summed up the loss of the enemy to this date during the campaign at seventy-nine killed, one hundred and two wounded, and six hundred and twelve captured. Colonel S. G. Hicks, commanding

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i. p. 607.

the post at Paducah, reported in regard to the engagement at that place on the 25th of March, that his force consisted of six hundred and sixty-five men, and that "Forrest had six thousand five hundred men. The casualties of my command were fourteen killed and forty-six wounded. The enemy's loss, according to the most reliable information that I could obtain, was three hundred killed and from one thousand to twelve hundred wounded. His killed and wounded may be safely set down at fifteen hundred. General Forrest admitted in conversation with some of his friends in this city that in no engagement during the war had he been so badly cut and crippled as at this place. Our loss in Government stores was inconsiderable. The colored troops fought as bravely as any in the fight. The gunboats Peosta, Captain Smith, and Paw Paw, Captain O'Neill, were present, and rendered valuable service in shelling the city and operating on the flank of the enemy as they surrounded the fort."*

General Chalmers had been ordered to gather up the scattered command in north Mississippi, and follow General Forrest into West Tennessee. Chalmers moved up by way of La Grange, and it was one of his regiments, Neely's, that encountered and drove back Colonel Fielding Hurst's regiment on the 29th of March, capturing fifty thousand rounds of much-needed ammunition. A Confederate writer of the period immediately following the war, alluded to Hurst's men as those "who had become as conspicuous for their craven conduct in the presence of armed enemies as for rapacity and brutally cruel outrages toward the defenseless citizens of the country which they devastated." Hurst's command, as a body, did not again encounter Forrest's men.

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 548, 549.

On the 3d of April Forrest telegraphed from Jackson, by way of Waterford, to Lieutenant-General Polk, at Demopolis, as follows: "Six hundred Federal prisoners will arrive at Ripley, Miss., to-day, *en route* for Demopolis. Colonel Neely engaged Hurst on the 29th of March, near Bolivar, capturing his entire wagon-train, routing and driving him to Memphis, killing thirty, including two captains, and taking thirty-five prisoners, including one captain." On the 4th of April he reported a sharp little engagement between Lieutenant-Colonel Crews's battalion and two regiments of Grierson's cavalry, fifteen miles east of Raleigh, on the Somerville road, in which Crews lost one man severely and one slightly wounded, while the enemy had six killed, fifteen or twenty wounded, and sustained a loss of three prisoners. The Federals, taking this to be the advance-guard of a large force, fell back upon Memphis. This incident serves to illustrate how opposing forces might reasonably be mistaken as to the strength of an enemy. A well-handled detachment could be made to appear as the advance-guard of a division. Forrest struck in so many unexpected places that one of his squadrons, circling around between the lines, nearly always created the impression that he was close at hand to attempt some daring venture. Hence it was not strange that General Grierson, with a considerable force thrown out east of Memphis, should conclude that it was prudent to retire.

On the 4th of April Forrest made a clear and comprehensive report to Lieutenant-General Polk, in which he said: "I have, as far as prudent, allowed my troops an opportunity of going home. Am now concentrating and preparing for any move the enemy may make, or for offensive operations, provided they do not move on me. . . . If permitted by the lieutenant-general commanding to remain in West Tennessee, would be

glad to have my artillery with me, and will send for it, as I could operate effectively with my rifle battery on the rivers. With the small guns I have here it would be folly to attempt the destruction or capture of boats. I am yet in hopes the lieutenant-general commanding will repair and operate the railroad to Corinth, as suggested in a former letter. With a brigade of infantry at Corinth as a force upon which I could fall back if too hard pressed, I am satisfied that I can hold West Tennessee against three times my numbers, and could send out from here all conscripts and deserters for service in infantry. At present it is impracticable, as I am without the transportation necessary to supply them with rations to Okolona through a country already depleted, and whose inhabitants are suffering for food. I find corn scarcer than I had expected, but have plenty of meal, flour, and bacon for troops. If supplied with the right kind of money or cotton, I can furnish my command with all small-arm ammunition required, and, I think, with small arms also. General Chalmers is here, and will be kept in readiness for any move that may be made from Memphis. General Buford's division is above this, and concentrating at Eaton, ten miles west of Trenton. As I came up here I employed a man to get up lead. He writes me that he has from eight thousand to ten thousand pounds at Corinth, which I shall send out as soon as possible, and will continue to get up all that can be had.

"There is a Federal force of five or six hundred at Fort Pillow, which I shall attend to in a day or two, as they have horses and supplies which we need. There are about six thousand troops now in Memphis; all else gone up the river. It is clear that they are concentrating all their forces before Richmond and at Chattanooga. I have ordered everything I have at Columbus moved up to Aberdeen, and Morton's battery up to

Tupelo to report to General Gholson, and shall bring it in here unless ordered to the contrary, as the little guns I have are of no use to me."*

On the 9th or 10th of April, General Forrest met his division commanders, Buford and Chalmers, and some of his brigade commanders, in Jackson, for consultation as to his next move. At this conference, Forrest determined to make a simultaneous demonstration on Memphis, Columbus, Paducah, and Fort Pillow, the latter *to be captured.* In pursuance of this plan, he ordered Colonel J. J. Neely with his forces to move on Memphis from the northeast, and create the impression that Forrest's whole command was moving in that direction; and at the same time ordered Colonel John McGuirk, with two Mississippi regiments, to push close to Memphis from the south, and give out the impression that General S. D. Lee was advancing with his whole force on Memphis from that direction. General Buford, with the Kentucky brigade, was ordered to move from Trenton and make demonstrations against Columbus and Paducah, Ky., and capture what Government horses, mules, and other Government property and army supplies he could, and prevent reenforcements from Fort Pillow.

General Buford, with the Kentucky brigade, moved rapidly forward from Trenton on Columbus and Paducah, and on the 12th, the same day of the attack on Fort Pillow, his scouts were in the vicinity of Columbus, and his whole force moving in that direction. Leaving Fulton, Ky., to his right, at a point northwest of Fulton, General Buford detached about one hundred and sixty picked men, under command of Captain H. A. Tyler and his trusted staff-officer and assistant inspector-general, Captain David E. Myers, with in-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 608, 609.

structions to push northwest to Columbus, Ky., with all the show of force possible, demand its surrender, make the impression that his whole division was there, and create a diversion in favor of Fort Pillow and Paducah. One of the objects that General Buford had in sending Captain Myers with this expedition was that the demand for surrender should be carried in by one of his staff-officers. General Buford changed his course and advanced rapidly on Paducah, where it had been learned that a considerable number of Government horses had been corralled since the last attack. It was important to capture these animals, if possible.

Captains Tyler and Myers, with their detachment, pressed forward, and at daylight on the morning of the 13th, charged and drove the Federal pickets in on the various roads at Columbus, and advanced to the edge of the timber. This woods was admirably adapted to making a great display of a small force by reason of some small, open spaces in full view of the fortifications. The Confederate troops were marched upon Columbus, by the main road, showing the head of the column, which was rapidly wheeled into the woods on the left, where it was circled back and came out again, keeping a continuous column moving for some time in the timber. Then the head of this circular column was for a considerable time moved to the right in the same manner, to create the impression of a brigade movement. Squads were sent to the extreme right and left, who showed themselves at different places, so as to give the impression that the command was formed in the woods all along the Federal right, left, and center. Then was displayed the head of a column of fours in the main road near the center. They also showed about one hundred men to the left and right, and advanced in a thin skirmish line into the open plain for some distance, when Captains Myers and

Jack Horn advanced under a flag of truce, with the following note and demand for surrender:

HEADQUARTERS CONFEDERATE FORCES BEFORE COLUMBUS, KY.,
April 13, 1864.

To Commanding Officer, United States Forces, Columbus, Ky.:

Fully capable of taking Columbus and its garrison by force, I desire to avoid the shedding of blood, and therefore demand the unconditional surrender of the forces under your command. Should you surrender, the negroes now in arms will be returned to their masters. Should I, however, be compelled to take the place, no quarter will be shown to the negro troops whatever; the white troops will be treated as prisoners of war.

A. BUFORD, *Brigadier-General.**

This flag of truce was halted at the outer works, where it was met by the adjutant and another staff-officer, who blindfolded the truce-bearers and conducted them to the headquarters of Colonel Lawrence, the commandant of the post. Next they were conducted into the colonel's room and the bandages taken from their eyes. Introductions followed, and the order for surrender delivered. Captain Horn, who was somewhat of a wit, remarked to the colonel, "that he had seen many a blind, but never went quite that blind before."

Colonel Lawrence asked to be excused a short time to consult with his officers as to the demand for surrender. He very thoughtfully asked whether they had breakfasted, and, being replied to in the negative, said he would have some prepared for them. Captains Myers and Horn were left in this room by themselves, which was next to the telegraph-office, divided therefrom by a plank partition. In a few minutes Colonel Lawrence sent in, with his compliments, two delicious

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 553.

cocktails, and a considerable time thereafter an elegant breakfast.

Much that was going on in the telegraph-office could be heard, and Captain Horn, who knew something of telegraphy himself, could catch portions of the messages being sent, and gathered therefrom that Colonel Lawrence was of opinion that Buford's whole division, consisting of several thousand mounted infantry and artillery, was in front of Columbus, and asked for reenforcements. The writer was told by one of the parties who carried the flag of truce that at one time they thought the garrison would be surrendered, and that they, in undertone, discussed the question as to how they could manage to receive the surrender without developing the weakness of their force.

The reply of Colonel Lawrence was considerably delayed. He was evidently playing for time, which exactly suited the Confederates. Finally, Captain Myers suggested a reply, fearing that his seeming indifference might arouse suspicion. This reply was soon thereafter handed him by Colonel Lawrence, and the envoys were politely blindfolded again, and escorted through the lines. Colonel Lawrence's reply was as follows:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE POST OF COLUMBUS, KY.,
April 13, 1864.

Brigadier-General A. BUFORD, *Commanding Confederate Forces before Columbus, Ky.*

GENERAL: Your communication of this date received, and in reply I would state that being placed by my Government with adequate force to hold and repel all enemies from my post, surrender is out of the question.

I am, general, very respectfully,

WILLIAM HUDSON LAWRENCE,
*Colonel Twenty-fourth New Jersey Volunteers, Commanding Post.**

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 553.

After the flag of truce returned, this small detachment remained moving about and making a display at various points until late in the afternoon—no one advancing from the garrison to offer battle, and of course they did not attempt to charge the works—when they withdrew, and by a forced march all night, on as near a direct line as possible, intercepted General Buford with the main column at daylight, about three miles from Paducah, on the morning of the 14th, and immediately joined in the second attack on that place.

Soon after daylight on the 14th of April, General Buford pushed forward his advance on all the roads leading into Paducah, Ky., rapidly, capturing a portion of the pickets and outposts and driving the remainder into the fort, and closely investing the same. Under a heavy fire from the artillery of the fort and gunboats, Colonel G. A. C. Holt, with a portion of the Third and Seventh Kentucky regiments, had dashed in and captured about one hundred and fifty good horses and some wagons and army supplies, and sent them to the rear. Even the ever-vigilant Colonel Hicks, commandant of the post, was evidently taken by complete surprise, as the outposts and pickets were cooking their breakfasts. He could not have supposed that Forrest, who was reported moving on Memphis and Fort Pillow respectively on the 12th and 13th, and Buford before Columbus on the night of the 13th, would, with any part of his command, attack him in force at daylight on the morning of the 14th. The Confederates had practical possession of Paducah, except immediately around the fort. At this juncture, General Buford sent in a flag of truce, demanded the surrender of the garrison in about the usual phraseology, signing the name of General Forrest thereto, to which Colonel Hicks responded, declining to do so.*

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 555.

General Buford only had about twelve hundred men, and no artillery, and remained in the outskirts of Paducah until evening, and retired some miles in the direction of Mayfield with the captured horses and other property, and bivouacked for the night in order to give his troops a much-needed rest. The next day he moved through Mayfield, and thence to Dresden, Tenn., for a few days' rest.

Alluding to the events of this time in West Tennessee and Kentucky, General Grant, in his Memoirs, says: "Forrest, a brave and intrepid cavalry general, was in the west with a large force, making a larger command necessary to hold what we had gained in Middle and West Tennessee. We could not abandon any of the territory north of the line held by the enemy, because it would lay the Northern States open to invasion. Forrest made a raid in West Tennessee up to the northern border, capturing the garrison of four or five hundred men at Union City, and followed it up by an attack on Paducah, Ky., on the banks of the Ohio. While he was able to enter the city, he failed to capture the forts or any part of the garrison. On the first intelligence of Forrest's raid, I telegraphed to Sherman to send all his cavalry against him, and not to let him get out of the trap he had put himself into. Forrest, however, fell back rapidly, and attacked the troops at Fort Pillow, a station for the protection of the navigation of the Mississippi River. The garrison consisted of a regiment of colored infantry and a detachment of Tennessee cavalry. The troops fought bravely, but were overpowered." *

* Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, vol. ii, pp. 129, 137, 138.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAPTURE OF FORT PILLOW.

Fort Pillow, a point on the east side of the Mississippi River, about forty miles on an air-line above Memphis, once strongly fortified by the Confederates, was now occupied by a small Federal force with no apparent object in view except to maintain a trading-post for the benefit of speculators and people of the interior claiming to be loyal. General Sherman afterward said the fort was not on his list, and he did not know it was even occupied. The outer lines of the place, some two miles long, as well as the river front, had been intended by General Beauregard's engineers, who laid it off in March and April, 1862, under direction of General Pillow, for defense on a large scale. After it was abandoned by the Confederates it was never occupied by the Federals with any considerable force. The water batteries, dismantled, were not refurnished. The fort on the river front could be approached to within one hundred or two hundred yards through ravines and gullies on the east and south sides without great exposure, and the artillery on the heavy breastworks could not be depressed so as to play on troops once in such postitions. It was reported to Forrest that raids were frequently made from Fort Pillow by small detachments of both negro and white troops upon the people of several counties for the purpose of foraging, and that defenseless women and children and old men were subject to robbery, insult, and greatest humilia-

tions. An earnest request was made that he would leave a brigade as a protection against marauders. This was impossible, but the general, having nothing else on hand requiring immediate attention, resolved to at once relieve the people as well as secure the needed horses and supplies known to be in the place.

The post was commanded by Major L. F. Booth,* who had been sent up from Memphis by General Hurlbut, March 28th, with a negro battalion, the First Alabama Light Artillery. Next in command was Major William F. Bradford, of the Thirteenth Tennessee Cavalry, and there was a company of negro troops and a few stragglers from other commands. Many of Bradford's men, it was understood, were deserters from the Confederate army, who had no great relish for fighting on either side. The major was a native of Middle Tennessee, of good family connections, and was a practising lawyer at Dyersburg, West Tennessee, when the war began. His kindred were nearly all on the Southern side, and he was looked upon as one who had betrayed his family to join their enemies and former slaves in a war of invasion and conquest. Such was the feeling that existed when the strife of a divided people was at its height.

General Hurlbut, in his order to Major Booth, March 28th, directing him to proceed to Fort Pillow, said: "As you will be, if my memory is correct, the senior officer of that post, you will take command, conferring freely and fully with Major Bradford, Thirteenth Tennessee Cavalry, whom you will find a good officer, though not of much experience. There are two points of land fortified at Fort Pillow, one of which only is now held by our troops. You will occupy both, either with your own troops alone, or holding one with

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 608, 609.

yours alone and giving the other in charge to Major Bradford.

"The positions are commanding, and can be held by a small force against almost any odds. I shall send you at this time two 13-pounder howitzers, as I hope it will not be necessary to mount heavy guns. If, in your opinion, 20-pounder Parrotts can be used, I will send them to you. My own opinion is that there is not range enough. Major Bradford is well acquainted with the country, and should keep scouts well out, and forward all information direct to me. I think Forrest's check at Paducah will not dispose him to try the river again, but that he will fall back to Jackson, and thence cross the Tennessee. As soon as this is ascertained, I shall withdraw your garrison. Nevertheless, act promptly in putting the work in perfect order, and the post into its strongest defense. Allow as little intercourse as possible with the country, and cause all supplies which go out to be examined with great strictness. No man whose loyalty is questioned should be allowed to come in or go out while the enemy is in West Tennessee. The post must be held."*

Brigadier-General James R. Chalmers was placed in charge of the move on Fort Pillow. The First Brigade, Colonel J. J. Neely, marched from Whiteville in the direction of Memphis, spreading the report that Forrest's whole command was on the way to attack the place, and Neely made a resolute show of building pontoon bridges and crossing Wolf River almost in sight of Memphis. Colonel John McGuirk, with the Third Mississippi State Cavalry, advanced at the same time on the south side of Memphis, drove in the pickets, and gave it out that General S. D. Lee was close at hand with all his troops to take part in a combined

* Rebellion Records, Serial 59, vol. xxxii, part iii, p. 176.

attack. General Hurlbut had reason to apprehend danger in his immediate front.

On the 10th of April, the way being clear and everything ready, General Forrest issued orders for Bell's and McCulloch's brigades, and Walton's battery of four small mountain howitzers at Sharons Ferry, on Forked Deer River, near Jackson, to move in the direction of Fort Pillow. This force left on the morning of the 11th, and was overtaken by General Forrest at 2 P. M., at Brownsville, twenty-eight miles distant. General Chalmers was ordered to make a forced march of thirty-eight miles to Fort Pillow. The advance was begun at once, with McCulloch's brigade in the lead. A citizen of Southern sympathies, named W. J. Shaw, who had been arrested by Major Bradford and held in the fort until he escaped, was secured as a guide. The night was drizzly and murky, and there were rough roads and weak bridges to pass over, but good progress was made by men accustomed to hard riding. Walton's howitzers, however, fell behind and never reached Fort Pillow. Just as day dawned, the advance-guard, Captain J. Frank Smith's company of the Second Missouri, surprised and captured all the Federal pickets, except one or two who escaped and at sunrise gave the alarm to the garrison. There were no sharpshooters to speak of within, but Chalmers's command was well supplied, and these, at a safe distance behind trees and logs, or in gullies, could do effective work on all who arose up to fire over the works. As Major Anderson, of General Forrest's staff, afterward said, in a special report:* "Any one could see at a glance that the fort was ours." There were four rows of cabins, and some tents and troops on the outside on a ridge, and from these a rifle-pit stretched to the right,

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 556.

or northeast, some three hundred yards. The fort proper, or inner line of defense, was six feet high and eight feet thick, with a ditch outside six feet deep and about twelve feet wide. The artillery equipment consisted of two 10-pounder Parrott rifled guns, two 12-pounder howitzers, and two 6-pounder rifle-bore field-pieces, each piece having an embrasure. The garrison consisted of the First Battalion Thirteenth Tennessee Cavalry, under Major William F. Bradford, ten officers and two hundred and eighty-five enlisted men; First Battalion Sixth U. S. Heavy Artillery (colored), eight commissioned officers and two hundred and thirteen enlisted men, and one section of Company D, Second U. S. Light Artillery (colored), one commissioned officer and forty men. Total white troops, two hundred and ninety-five; colored, two hundred and sixty-two; aggregate, five hundred and fifty-seven,* all under command of Major Booth.

After the capture of the pickets, McCulloch's brigade rapidly took a position half a mile to the south of the fort, near the river; Bell's brigade was ordered up toward the center; Wilson's regiment was deployed in front, and engaged the garrison in a heavy skirmish. The rest of the brigade was to take a position along Coal Creek, near the river, on the right, but this could not be reached without unnecessary exposure, and the plan was changed. At nine o'clock, General Forrest, after a ride of sixty-four miles since six o'clock the morning before, accompanied by his staff, escort, and a detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel D. M. Wisdom, came upon the ground. It was learned afterward that Major Booth, commanding the fort, and his adjutant were killed about that time, though the major's name was used in the correspondence that ensued. The

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 556.

general, as usual, pushed to the front to reconnoiter, and in doing so had two horses killed under him and another wounded. He also received a painful injury himself from a falling horse. After examining the ground carefully and adopting a plan, he gave orders to Bell's brigade to move up by way of a ravine leading near to the face of the fort. This was soon done, and the men occupied more sheltered positions. McCulloch carried the entrenchments on the highest point of the ridge in front of the southeastern face of the works. The Federals were driven in, and fell back to the main fort and the earthworks in its front. They made an attempt to burn the cabins mentioned before, but only succeeded in burning one row. McCulloch seized the others, and occupied them advantageously with his sharpshooters. Adjutant Mack J. Leaming, of the Thirteenth Tennessee Union Cavalry, in his report, says: "We suffered pretty severely in the loss of commissioned officers by the unerring aim of the rebel sharpshooters, and among this loss I have to record our post-commander, Major L. F. Booth, who was killed almost instantly by a musket-ball through the breast. . . . At about 11 A. M. the rebels made a second determined assault on our works, and were again successfully repulsed with severe loss. They succeeded, however, in getting possession of two rows of barracks, running parallel to the south side of the fort, and distant about one hundred and fifty yards. The barracks had previously been ordered to be destroyed, but after severe loss on our part in the attempt to execute the order, our men were compelled to retire without accomplishing the desired end, save only as to the row nearest to the fort. From these barracks the enemy kept up a murderous fire on our men despite all our efforts to dislodge him. Owing to the close proximity of these buildings to the fort, and to the fact

that they were on considerably lower ground, our artillery could not be sufficiently depressed to destroy them, or even render them untenable for the enemy." Up to this time the gunboat New Era, well back in the river, had been shelling the Confederates furiously by signals from the fort, but without doing much damage. The guns in the parapet also were fired rapidly with similar lack of effect.

The Confederate line, at no place more than three hundred yards from the fort, was now short and compact, and held a well-protected position extending from the river on the south to Coal Creek on the north. There were sharpshooters in front of them, some not more than sixty yards from the fort, and sharpshooters four or five hundred yards in the rear on high knolls, from which they could pick off those who showed themselves on the parapet or behind the guns in the embrasures.

Satisfied now that he could carry the place by assault, but desiring to save the lives of his own men as well as the garrison, General Forrest caused a flag of truce to be raised about 3 P. M., when all firing ceased. Calling Captain Walter A. Goodman, of General Chalmers's staff, he dictated a demand for surrender, as follows: "As your gallant defense of the fort has entitled you to the treatment of brave men, I now demand an unconditional surrender of your force, assuring you at the same time that they will be treated as prisoners of war. I have received a fresh supply of ammunition, and can easily take your position. Should my demand be refused, I can not be responsible for the fate of your command." This was carried by Captain Goodman, accompanied by Lieutenant Frank Rogers, a volunteer aide on General Forrest's staff, and W. H. Rhodes, acting temporarily on the staff. Three officers came out to receive the flag, and one of them car-

ried it into the fort. In about twenty minutes a reply was brought out and taken to General Forrest. After reading it, he dictated another note, and handing it to Lieutenant Rogers, said: "You can tell that Federal officer that if I am compelled to butt my men against their works it will be bad for them." Lieutenant Rogers, perhaps, did not deliver this verbal message, but delivered the note to the same officers as before. One of them went into the fort. The other two, in conversation, expressed a doubt as to General Forrest being there in person, and referred to the way in which Colonel Hawkins had been taken in at Union City by Colonel Duckworth, of the Seventh Tennessee, a few days before. General Forrest was sent for, and, riding up, addressed the officers, satisfying them as to his identity, and rode back to his point of observation, four hundred yards in the rear. A reply was soon sent out asking for one hour's time to consult with the officers of the gunboats. Other boats were seen approaching from below and above, two of them at least loaded with troops presumably to relieve the garrison. General Forrest demanded a surrender in twenty minutes, which was peremptorily refused. Major Bradford, it may be remarked, had strong personal reasons for dreading to fall into the hands of the Confederates, and was, from all accounts, a weak, vain man as well as without military experience, and no doubt thought he could hold the attacking force in check until the arrival of relief from the river. The Olive Branch, with troops and artillery on board, coming from below suspiciously near the shore while the flag of truce was still flying, was warned off by McCulloch's men under direction of Staff-Officer C. W. Anderson, and kept at a safe distance. A single volley would have resulted in wholesale slaughter of troops and citizens crowding the decks. A few admonitory shots were fired at the

pilot-house, which caused the steamer to sheer off and pass up on the other side. Captain Marshall, of the New Era, requested the Olive Branch to proceed to Cairo as soon as possible, and send four or five hundred rounds of ammunition and stop all boats coming down the river. All this occurred while the flag of truce was flying, and General George F. Shepley, on board the Olive Branch, was excused afterward for not rendering succor to the fort only by reason of his inability to do so, and not because there was a flag of truce pending. General Shepley, in his report of his trip up the river, states that the boat was heavily loaded with a portion of the men of two batteries, with horses, guns, caissons, tents, and baggage taken on at Memphis, and with orders to report to General Brayman at Cairo. The steamer Cheek hove in sight from Memphis, just below Fort Pillow, and was brought alongside the Olive Branch about the same time that the steamer Liberty, with troops on board, came down the river, having passed Fort Pillow. She only hailed the Olive Branch, and said: "All right up there. You can go by. The gunboat is lying off the fort."*

General Forrest, having his command well in hand, after heavy skirmishing for several hours, and finding that the officers within were determined to hold out in the evident hope of relief from the boats in sight, resolved to take the place by assault, even at the hazard of a heavy loss of life. When the final and most peremptory refusal of all came, he acted at once. Turning to an aide-de-camp, according to W. H. Rhodes, who, as before stated, was serving on Forrest's staff that day, he said: "Go to Colonel Bell, commanding on our right, and tell him when he hears my orderly bugler sound the charge, to go over these works if he

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 573.

gets killed and every man in his command, and tell him I don't want to hear of Tennessee being behind."

Turning to another aide, he said: "You go to Colonel McCulloch, commanding our left, and tell him when he hears my orderly bugler sound the charge, to go over the works if he is killed and every man in his command, and tell him I don't want to hear of Missouri being left behind." Waiting until the officers had time to reach the brigade commanders, he turned to Gaus, his ever-faithful bugler, and said: "Gaus, ride your horse up the ravine until you reach about the center of our lines, and sound the charge." Gaus galloped to the center, and promptly gave the blast which settled the fate of Fort Pillow. The whole line was immediately in motion. The guns of the fort roared, and the infantry fired volley after volley. The parapet was a sheet of flame and smoke. The Confederates answered with a yell which rose above the din of battle, but they reserved their fire. They dashed across the twelve-foot ditch and clambered up the escarpment, the leaders helping those behind, and were soon pouring into the fort. They had no bayonets, but at once opened a murderous fire on the now thoroughly demoralized garrison. The colored troops, who had been most defiant while the flag of truce was flying, were the first to break and run down the bluff, and numbers of them plunged into the river, but many of the white, and some black troops, made a desperate show of resistance, and there was never any formal surrender. For fifteen minutes the slaughter was fearful. The momentum of the assaulting force was so great that the besieged were quickly driven under the bluff, where the survivors were captured. How many rushed into the river and were drowned will never be known. Those thus lost were praying for the gunboat that never came. The New Era kept at a safe distance, and

was silent. General Forrest, and members of his staff, entered the fort on foot while the firing was still furious. The garrison was practically without officers, while drunken soldiers were shooting in a dazed sort of way at the storming party. The Confederates had closed in from the flanks, and were doing murderous work. The flag still floated defiantly from a tall pole in the center of the square, and none of the defenders thought to pull it down. One of General Forrest's staff-officers, however, suggested that the halyards be cut, and this was done. The Confederates, who could see the flag from all points of attack, took this as a sign of surrender, and at once quit firing. Some of the survivors ran around wildly and kept up a show of resistance for a short time, but were shot down or captured and disarmed. It is the concurrent testimony of Confederates who were in the engagement that the slaughter ceased when the flag fell, but of course there might have been individual exceptions. That the assailants were highly wrought up after an all-night ride and an all-day fight, and by the insane defense of a fort which they knew they could take, is not inconsistent with human nature, for there was no reasoning when force met force "to settle the differences of a century." Another aggravation was the conduct of the besieged, especially the negroes, while the flag of truce was flying and the lines were close together. The latter were very defiant and insulting in language and grimaces, and, no doubt, felt safe against any attack. The officers, after they saw the force in front and knew that Forrest was really on the ground, should have known better. Had Major Booth survived instead of Major Bradford, the fortunes of the day might have been different. The latter fled down under the bluff, and only revealed his rank after he was captured and safe. The battle lasted not over twenty min-

utes, but twelve or fifteen hundred determined men, firing from three sides into a struggling, seething mass of human beings, could play havoc in that short time. It was a terrific slaughter, and yet the Confederates engaged in it—and many of them are living yet (1902) —always claimed that it was not greater than the circumstances justified; that none were killed after they surrendered, and that no prisoners were killed or mistreated in or out of the fort that day or next day.

Major Bradford evidently expected to be rescued and carried off with his troops on the gunboat, but he escaped from the storm of battle unhurt. Late in the day he was temporarily paroled to attend the funeral of his elder brother, Captain Theodore F. Bradford, and after that he was given quarters and supper with Colonel McCulloch. During the night he escaped, assumed the disguise of a conscript or butternut soldier, and sought to make his way to Memphis.

When the battle was over, Forrest's men and surgeons gave attention to the wounded on both sides. The live-stock, stores, and munitions of war, as far as available, were hastily removed to the rear. Captain Young, of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, who first came out to meet the flag of truce, was among the prisoners, and in the afternoon he was sent with Major Anderson, of Forrest's staff, with a flag of truce to endeavor to communicate with the captain of the New Era, and turn over to him the Federal wounded. This was a failure, however, for the vessel steamed off up the river without giving any response.

General Forrest turned over the command to Brigadier-General Chalmers, with instructions to bury the dead, collect arms and other portable property, transfer the Federal wounded to the first steamer passing, and to follow as soon as possible with his division and the unwounded prisoners to Brownsville. At sunset,

accompanied by his staff and escort, he set out for Jackson, and encamped that night at a farmhouse seven miles eastward. General Chalmers caused the prisoners to bury the Federal dead in the trenches, the officers separately from their men, moved his troops back from the river, and went into camp that evening. The next morning a detail was sent into the fort to bury any of the dead overlooked and collect the remaining arms. In a short time the gunboat Silver Cloud came up and opened fire. The officer in command of the detail, expecting to leave, set fire to some tents and cabins in which were the bodies of a few negroes killed the previous day, giving rise to the report that they had been burned alive.

After General Forrest and his staff had mounted their horses, on the morning of the 13th, they heard the firing at the fort, and he sent back Major Anderson, with Captain Young, the late provost marshal of Fort Pillow, to make an effort to have the Federal wounded turned over to their friends. Major Anderson withdrew the detail from the fort, hoisted a white flag, and arranged with the master of the Silver Cloud for a truce until 5 P. M. Several other vessels stopped at the landing, and many Federals came ashore. During the day the remaining dead were buried, and the wounded, about seventy officers and men, were removed to the steamer Platte Valley. Of these, the Federal surgeon of the hospital at Mound City, Ill., testified that he received thirty-four whites and twenty-seven colored men; some died on the way. General Chalmers carried off as prisoners of war seven officers and two hundred and nineteen enlisted men (thirty-six negroes and one hundred and sixty-three whites) unwounded. This would make an aggregate of about two hundred and ninety-six who survived the battle, including the mortally wounded, but does not include

the unknown camp-followers and refugees who belonged to no command and appeared upon no list.

One phase of the reckless and insane defense of Fort Pillow is worthy of mention as throwing some light upon the state of affairs within. After the place was taken, it was learned that the troops had been liberally dosed with liquor during the eight hours' investment. Many of the prisoners were in a muddled condition, equally crazed by fright and intoxication. Colonel C. R. Barteau, of the Second Tennessee, Bell's brigade, who lived to practise law in Memphis many years, stated that numerous barrels of whisky and kegs of beer, partly emptied, were found placed at convenient distances apart, with tin dippers attached for the use of the Federal soldiers. Many others give the same testimony. The negroes especially had made free use of the opportunity, and this accounts in part for their conduct while the flag of truce was flying. When General Forrest rode up to the front to satisfy the officers that he was actually present, the demonstrations of the negroes were such that members of his staff urged him to withdraw, which he did as soon as the purpose of his visit was accomplished. These ignorant, half-drunken creatures were about as likely to shoot Forrest, whom many of them recognized by sight, there under the flag of truce as at any other time and place.

The capture of Fort Pillow was not a great military exploit except by reason of the audacity and bold dash of the movement. Forrest went there with men enough, and accomplished his purpose, though suffering greater losses than he expected in killed and wounded. Had a massacre been intended, it could have been accomplished by a word from Forrest. The fort was well though injudiciously defended. Much testimony was taken and sworn to afterward, which was calcu-

lated to inflame the Northern mind and convince the civilized world that the Confederates were inhuman butchers unmindful of the rules of civilized warfare. A few of the deponents were white officers, but the great mass of affidavits came from ignorant negroes who could scarcely make their mark. All this was necessarily of an *ex-parte* nature, but it had its intended effect, and was not seriously questioned at the time. But above all discussion, criticism, and confusion of ideas, the one fact stands out clearly that while General Forrest needed the horses and stores in the fort, the main object of the raid was to "break up that nest," and relieve the people of several counties from the frequent depredations coming from that quarter.

The charge was made, in connection with others, that Forrest was accountable for the death of Major Bradford, which occurred about two days after he was captured. The answer to this was that Bradford was picked up on suspicion by some Confederates at Big Hatchie River, a few miles north of Covington, taken into the town, and there recognized by the citizens, sent across the country toward Brownsville, and turned over to the rear-guard of Forrest's retreating column. The general was far in the front, and Chalmers was also ahead. Bradford was placed in charge of five men, who reported, when they came up with the main command, that he attempted to escape and was killed. A conscript, who afterward escaped, made affidavit that he saw the shooting, and that Bradford was on his knees begging for his life. Forrest claimed that he did not hear of Bradford's death until eight or ten days afterward. There was some correspondence in regard to the matter, but General Forrest, who was very busy getting south just then, disclaimed any sanction of this or any other deed not justified by the rules of war. General M. Brayman made a report directly to the

Secretary of War from Cairo, Ill., April 28, 1864, sixteen days after the fall of Fort Pillow, in which he said: "Recognizing the exigency of the case, I prefer to transmit such testimony as could be obtained in the shortest time, and will add such as can be hereafter procured. You will, however, find sufficient in these papers to enforce absolute conviction upon all minds that violations of the laws and usages of civilized war, and of those obligations of common humanity which even barbarians and heathen tribes in some sort observe, have been perpetrated.

"Men and women who passed through the excitements of the battle, as well as the horrors of an indiscriminate massacre which raged not only when the blood was hot and the judgment clouded by conflict, but which reached into the quiet of the following day, most of them mutilated, hacked, and torn, and some, while dying, have patiently, calmly, and even with a forgiving spirit, told their pitiful story. It may be added that these murders came not of sudden heat consequent upon battle, and perpetrated by soldiers where their officers could not control them. The purpose to do this very thing was avowed by rebel officers in command. At Paducah threats of indiscriminate murder were made; at Columbus, the slaughter of all colored soldiers was threatened in official papers, signed by the generals, which are in our possession. Verbal threats of the same character will, in due time, be proved. The fate intended for Paducah and Columbus fell only on Fort Pillow," etc.* This was followed by a flood of affidavits prepared and signed at Cairo, Fort Pickering, Memphis, and other places. Much of this was conflicting and extravagant, but was accepted as if sifted through the processes of the courts in times

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 518, 519.

of peace. General Washburn, with headquarters at Memphis, and General Forrest had a spirited correspondence. The former charged that the captured troops had been inhumanly butchered. The latter denied this with customary vigor of language, and referred to a report that colored troops in Memphis had on bended knees sworn to remember Fort Pillow and show no quarter to Confederate prisoners. General Washburn did not deny this or assume the responsibility, but rather justified such action if it had been taken.* There was not much time in the rapid whirl of events for formal or diplomatic communications, and a few sharp tilts ended the mere letter-writing. General Hurlbut had remained in Memphis until succeeded by General Washburn, and General Forrest was soon on another move.

On the 6th of May, 1864, it was resolved by the Confederate Congress at Richmond that: "The thanks of the Congress are eminently due and are hereby cordially tendered to Major-General N. B. Forrest and the officers and men of his command, for their late brilliant and successful campaign in Mississippi, West Tennessee, and Kentucky; a campaign which has conferred upon its authors fame as enduring as the record of the struggle which they have so brilliantly illustrated."

On the 18th of the month a subcommittee of the Congress of the United States was appointed to take testimony in regard to the "massacre" at Fort Pillow, and made a most damaging and condemnatory report, charging an indiscriminate slaughter after the fort had been taken by storm, which spared neither sex, white nor black, soldier nor civilian; that the wounded were intentionally burned to death in the barracks and tents

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, pp. 587, 588.

which were destroyed by fire, and that the rebels buried some of the living with the dead. All of which was vigorously denied by Forrest and his men long after the war closed, when excitement had subsided and cooler judgment prevailed. Forrest, at that period of the war, still regarded negroes as property, and favored the policy of capturing as many as possible and restoring them to their owners, or turning them over to the Confederate Government to be employed in the construction of fortifications or other public works. It may be further said, in justice to General Forrest, that this was the only time he was ever charged with cruelty to prisoners or inhuman conduct, although many thousands of Union officers and soldiers fell into his hands.

A heavy Federal force had gone up the river, but the country was not depleted. General Sherman, on the 24th of April, wrote from Nashville, under the head of "Confidential," to General C. C. Washburn, commanding district of Memphis: "There should be at Memphis Buckland's brigade entire, two thousand; three white regiments (One Hundred and Third Illinois one), fifteen hundred; Kaffner's negro regiment, Fort Pickering, twelve hundred; Chetlain's Black Brigade, two thousand; Grierson's division of cavalry, at least four thousand; total, ten thousand seven hundred. . . . My opinion is, by a close examination you will find at Memphis fully seven thousand good men, besides the Fort Pickering garrison and the militia. . . . When I left Memphis, Grierson had fully five thousand horses. Not one of them has been drawn away, and I want to know what has become of them."*

That General Sherman thought well of some of Forrest's methods was indicated in a despatch to General M. C. Meigs, quartermaster-general at Washing-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part iii, pp. 485, 486.

ton, dated Nashville, April 26th, in which he said: "It is now going to be a grand scramble who is going to get the horses, Forrest or ourselves. I think Forrest can beat us in the horse-stealing business, but we must learn. As I advance into Georgia, Forrest will surely manage somehow to gather the horses in Kentucky and Tennessee, and if we could make up our minds to it, we might take them first. . . . By our returns we have fifty-two thousand cavalry, but if I can get up three divisions of five thousand each, I will deem myself lucky."* This condition of affairs accounts for General Sherman's tacit willingness for Forrest to operate in West Tennessee and Kentucky rather than on the lines between Nashville and Chattanooga, or farther south. In fact, he intimated more than once that he had no objection to Forrest amusing himself in that part of the country. It had been deemed advisable to give up such interior places as Hickman and Union City, but to hold Cairo, Columbus, Memphis, Vicksburg, and Natchez at all hazards, to protect the river. Fort Pillow seems to have been hardly considered in the general plans.

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part iii, pp. 503, 504.

CHAPTER XIV.

BRICE'S CROSSROADS.

General Forrest established his headquarters at Jackson on the 14th of April, and remained there until the 2d of May, directing the collection of absentees and conscripts, horses, and such supplies as could be sent south. Brigadier-General Buford, by the 28th of April, assembled his division and Bell's brigade at Jackson. On the 2d of May he was ordered, with Neely's brigade, to convoy three hundred prisoners and a large ox-train, freighted with subsistence, liquors, leather, etc., to Tupelo, Miss. The Kentucky brigade, which entered the campaign one thousand and four strong, had increased to seventeen hundred and seventeen effective men, and Bell's brigade, which started with a total of twelve hundred and fifty-four, now numbered over seventeen hundred men, and all were well rested and mounted. Buford made the distance, seventy-eight miles from Jackson to Rienzi, by the 4th of May, transferred his prisoners and supplies to the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and reached Tupelo on the 6th. Meanwhile Chalmers had passed through Brownsville, Somerville, and La Grange with the Fort Pillow prisoners, destined for points farther south. These being transferred, he established headquarters at Oxford until the 2d of May, and then moved toward Tupelo. Various movements and dispositions of commands were made. McCulloch resumed his old post temporarily behind the Tallahatchie River, near Pa-

nola, while Bell's and Neely's brigades reentered West Tennessee to look after absentees, and to give officers and men an opportunity to visit their families and procure clothing and fresh horses.

On the 2d of May General Forrest left Jackson with his staff and escort for Tupelo, taking the road through Bolivar, Tenn., and Ripley, Miss. Near the former place, that afternoon, he learned that a Federal cavalry force, supposed to be two thousand strong, under General Sturgis, was engaged near by in a skirmish with a part of McDonald's battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. Crews, and pressed quickly to the scene, two miles west of Bolivar, and joined in the fighting. His small force and Crews's men, altogether about three hundred strong, were pressed back within some works west of the town, where a stand was made to cover the retreat of Forrest's headquarters train, some ambulances, and several hundred unarmed men. A sharp fight continued some two hours. The Federal loss was reported by General Sturgis at two killed and ten wounded. Major Strange, of Forrest's staff, had his arm broken by a carbine-ball. Near night, Forrest fell back, and overtook his train five miles from Bolivar, and proceeded without further incident to Tupelo, reaching there on the 5th of May, one day ahead of Buford.

General Sturgis kept up the pursuit as far as Ripley, but upon reaching that place on the 6th, found that Forrest's rear-guard had passed nearly two days before. In a report to General Washburn, made at Salem, Miss., on the 7th, he said: "It was at Ripley that I had hoped against hope to intercept him; but he was abundantly supplied with forage, and enabled to travel day and night. Still I should have continued the pursuit had it not been for the utter destitution of the country from Bolivar to Ripley, a distance of forty

miles. My horses had scarcely anything to eat, and my artillery horses absolutely nothing. Had I penetrated one day's march farther, and found the forage equally scarce, I should have not only failed to overtake Forrest, but have been compelled to abandon my artillery and a great many cavalry horses. I need hardly assure you that it was with greatest reluctance, and after mature deliberation with myself and my principal officers, that I resolved to abandon the chase as hopeless. Though we could not catch the scoundrel, we are at least rid of him, and that is something." Writing to General Sherman from Memphis, May 13th, he said: "My little campaign is over, and I regret to say Forrest is still at large. . . . I regret very much that I could not have the pleasure of bringing you a lock of his hair, but he is too great a plunderer to fight anything like an equal force, and we have to be satisfied with driving him from the State. He may turn on your communications, and I think he will, but see no way to prevent it from this point with this force."*

Forrest found Gholson's brigade of Mississippi State Cavalry at Tupelo, and a few days later this force was transferred to the Confederate States' service. Chalmers also soon reported, and some time was taken for reorganization. The four batteries of four guns each, under Captains Morton, Rice, Thrall, and Walton were formed into a battalion under Captain John W. Morton as chief of artillery. Chalmers's division was composed of McCulloch's, Neely's, and Rucker's brigades, and Buford's division of Bell's and Lyon's brigades, altogether twenty regiments, four battalions, five independent companies, and sixteen guns. This force was distributed at different points consider-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxii, part i, p. 698.

able distances apart, in order to more easily secure subsistence and forage, as well as to be ready for attack in any direction. Every detail of interior administration was directed by an active and vigorous mind.

Buford's division made a reconnaissance from Tupelo to Corinth from the 16th to the 24th of the month, and about the 26th, Chalmers was detached with McCulloch's and Neely's brigades and Walton's battery, and sent on an expedition to the interior of Alabama, going as far as Montevallo, forty miles eastward of Tuscaloosa, to meet a supposed raid coming from Huntsville and Decatur to destroy some iron-works. A part of this division remained in that region some weeks. On the 10th of June, McCulloch's brigade was ordered by Major-General Lee to return by forced marches to Columbus, Miss. Neely's brigade was at that time at Blue Mountain, Ala., near the Georgia line, and Rucker was falling back from Oxford. General Roddey was, in the latter part of May, near Decatur, Ala., and reported to be closely pressed by the Federals. General Forrest prepared to go to his assistance, and so advised him, and had Buford's division ready for that purpose. On the 30th a despatch from Roddey was received to the effect that the raid had probably gone toward Kingston, Ga. Forrest sent specific instructions to Roddey to hold his command together, and have boats ready for the crossing of the Tennessee River. He proposed to leave on the 1st of June with twenty-four hundred men and six pieces of artillery for Decatur, and on the morning of that day Buford's division, except Newsom's regiment left at Tupelo, and Russell's at Corinth, set out for north Alabama with ten days' rations. Morton's and Rice's batteries accompanied the expedition. The time seemed to have come when Forrest might break away from his department, cross the Tennessee River and make a

strike in Sherman's rear. He had preferred to make a move on Memphis, but was overruled by General S. D. Lee, who thought it would be more important to break up railroad lines south of Nashville.

General Sherman expected this move, for he knew what damage might be done by such a man as Forrest. Busy as he was on the Georgia campaign, flanking and pushing back General Joseph E. Johnston toward Atlanta, he found time to look well to the territory in his rear, and urged General Washburn to care for Forrest. The man chosen for this work was Brigadier-General Samuel D. Sturgis, an officer of great ability, who had followed Forrest out of West Tennessee as far as Ripley, Miss.; and it so happened that the day Forrest started for north Alabama, where he might combine with Roddey and make a formidable raid into Middle Tennessee, General Sturgis, looking for Forrest, marched out from Memphis and Lafayette with thirty-three hundred cavalry, forty-eight hundred infantry, four hundred artillerists, with twenty-two guns and a supply-train of two hundred and fifty wagons and ambulances.

General Washburn says in his report: "The number of troops deemed necessary was six thousand, but I sent eight thousand. Everything was in complete order, and the force consisted of some of our best troops. I saw to it personally that they lacked nothing to insure a successful campaign." The cavalry was divided into two brigades: the first, fifteen hundred strong, with six pieces of artillery, was commanded by Colonel George E. Waring, Jr., a brilliant officer and hard fighter, who had struck Forrest at Okolona. The second, eighteen hundred strong, accompanied by a battery of four guns, was commanded by Colonel E. F. Winslow, who had been with General Sherman on the expedition to Meridian the previous February.

These brigades constituted a division commanded by Brigadier-General B. H. Grierson, a cavalry leader of high reputation. The infantry was divided into three brigades, commanded (1) by Colonel A. Wilkins, two thousand strong, with six pieces of artillery; (2) by Colonel G. B. Hoge, sixteen hundred strong, with four guns, and (3) twelve hundred colored troops and two guns under Colonel Edward Bouton. All three united as a division under command of Colonel W. L. McMillin, the entire expedition being commanded by Brigadier-General Sturgis. All were splendidly armed and equipped. The weather was rainy, the roads bad, and the country desolate and almost deserted. The head of the column did not reach Ripley, in Tippah County, seventy-five miles from Memphis, until the 7th of June, where Winslow's brigade ran up against two regiments of Rucker's brigade, who had been sent to develop but not to fight any force in front.

General Forrest had moved from Tupelo on the 1st of June. He proceeded as far as Russellville, Franklin County, north Alabama, where he was overtaken by a despatch from General Lee, directing him to return with all haste, which he did, reaching Tupelo on the 6th of June. He next made headquarters at Booneville, on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, where Rucker reported to him on the night of the 9th. Sturgis had halted at Stubbs Farm, nine miles from Brice's cross-roads, and about the highest point in Mississippi. Forrest's forces were scattered. Bell's brigade, twenty-seven hundred and eighty-seven strong, was at Rienzi, twenty-five miles from Brice's; Rucker, seven hundred strong, was with Forrest at Booneville, eighteen miles from Brice's; Johnson's and Lyon's brigades, five hundred and eight hundred strong, were at Baldwyn, five and one-half miles from Brice's. General Forrest had with him at Booneville, Morton's and Rice's batteries,

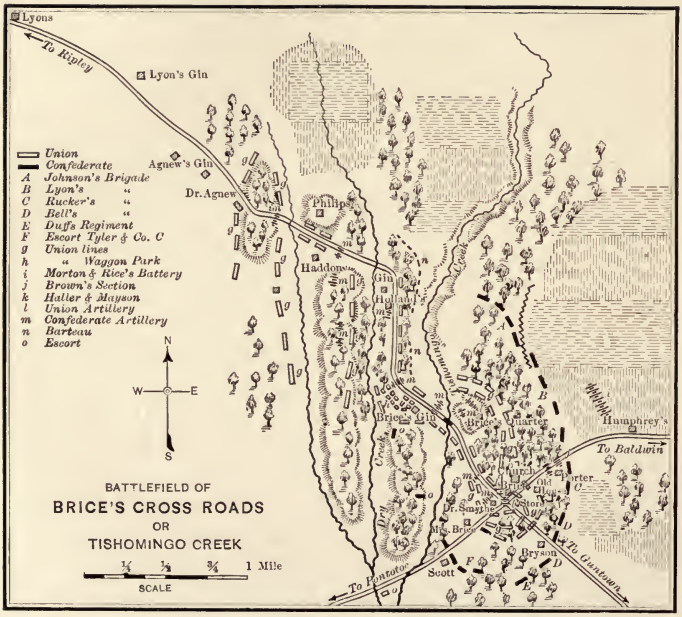
besides his escort. General Lee came up from Okolona by rail to confer with Forrest, and formulated the idea of falling back farther so as to weaken Sturgis's connection with his base of supplies before giving battle. As a result, General Forrest was instructed to prepare three days' rations, and march the following morning in the direction of Brice's crossroads, and thence toward Prairie Mound and Okolona. General Lee left that night with all supplies not needed at Booneville. Forrest was not ordered to retreat or avoid a battle, yet there was such a suggestion at least as a matter of policy.

That night Forrest held an informal council of war. His mind was fairly well made up, but he felt the necessity of concurrence on the part of his chiefs. General Buford, Colonel Rucker, and Chief of Artillery Morton joined in the conference. General Forrest stated that, while he would prefer to get the enemy into the open country, a conflict might be precipitated before joining Lee at Okolona, where Chalmers could soon be expected from Alabama, and troops even be brought by rail from Mobile. On the night of the 9th he sent word to Bell to prepare three days' rations, and be ready to move before daylight the next morning in the direction of Brice's crossroads, and all other commands within reach received similar orders. The artillery, eight pieces, was at Booneville, and had to be pulled over eighteen miles of muddy roads to reach the scene of action. Forrest's command was so scattered that it could not all be concentrated for the fight. A man of more caution would have waited at least for Chalmers and Roddey. When he returned hastily from Alabama, and took a position with Buford's brigade near Rienzi, his impression was that the Federal force coming from Memphis was intended to reenforce Sherman in Georgia; but, after learning through scouts

that the column had turned southward, and after a conference with General Lee, he made haste to intercept the movement. Lee, in returning to Okolona, had taken with him Ferrell's and Thrall's batteries, and expected to make the fight when Sturgis should be well out in the open, and as far away as possible from his base of supplies and place of retreat in Memphis.

The common road from Baldwyn to Ellistown runs in a southwesterly direction, and is crossed at Brice's farm by a road from Ripley, some twenty-two miles west, running slightly east of southeast, through Guntown, on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and on to Fulton and beyond. Baldwyn is above Guntown and Tupelo below, as seen on the map. There was a little country store and a few outhouses near the Brice house, still standing, and forty or fifty acres of cleared land. Back of this in all directions was heavy timber, and a thick growth of black-jack, scrub-oak, and bushes, with vines and briers in many places through which troops, once off the road, could move only slowly, especially mounted troops. The country was undulating but not broken into sharp ridges. A mile northeast of the crossroads a lane was reached a quarter of a mile long, with broad fields on each side. Forrest was coming this way, but was not the first to get there.

About half a mile west of Brice's, ran, from north to south, Tishomingo Creek, which is some twenty feet lower than the common level of the country. The main road descends through high banks to the bottoms, and the stream at that time was spanned by a strong bridge, and there was a large corn-field in cultivation on the west side. The Union forces came this way. Grierson's splendid division of cavalry wound down toward Brice's at 5.30 A. M. on that bloody 10th


Lyons
To Ripley
Lyon's Gin
Agnew's Gin
Dr. Agnew
Philips
Haddons
Gin
Holland
Brice's Gin
Brice's Quarter
Humphrey's
To Baldwin
Church
Porter
Old Store
Dr. Smythe
Mrs. Brice
Bryson
Scott
To Pontotoc
To Guntown
Dry Creek
Tishomingo Creek
Union
Confederate
A Johnson's Brigade
B Lyon's "
C Rucker's "
D Bell's "
E Duffs Regiment
F Escort Tyler & Co. C
g Union lines
h " Waggon Park
i Morton & Rice's Battery
j Brown's Section
k Haller & Mayson
l Union Artillery
m Confederate Artillery
n Barteau
o Escort
N
W
E
S
BATTLEFIELD OF
BRICE'S CROSS ROADS
OR
TISHOMINGO CREEK
¼ ½ ¾ 1 Mile
SCALE

of June. The infantry took ample time for breakfast, and marched leisurely at 7.30. The early morning air was warm and humid after the rains, and the men soon felt the languor that increases with the rising of a hot June sun in a semitropical climate. Still, all moved forward with high hope and buoyant step. By four o'clock that morning Forrest was moving on a low ridge from which the waters flow southeast into the Tombigbee River. His nature was so aggressive that he could not forego such an opportunity for a fight.

There were only three small brigades within easy reach: Rucker, with seven hundred men, and the artillery at Booneville, while Lyon, with eight hundred, and Johnson, just from north Alabama after a forced march, with five hundred men, were at Baldwyn, twelve miles farther south. Total rank and file, two thousand. Besides, Forrest had his escort, eighty-five, and Gatrel's Georgia company of fifty with him. Forrest's entire available force numbered about four thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, besides artillery; total, four thousand eight hundred and eighty-five. The Federal force effectives were thirty-two hundred cavalry on the field, and infantry forty-five hundred, with twenty-two pieces of artillery, four hundred; aggregate, eighty-one hundred.

The advance-guard of Waring's brigade had driven in the Confederate posts found above and at the bridge, and followed them past Brice's and out to the left in the direction of Baldwyn, as well as on the Guntown road. Advancing a mile, Waring came to the lane and fields mentioned above. Forrest was coming that way with his escort and Lyon's brigade in advance. The three brigades named were ordered up at a gallop. Captain Randles's company of the Seventh Kentucky, being sent forward by General Lyon to reconnoiter, found the Federal cavalry in force and well posted. The

Third Kentucky, Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. C. Holt; was dismounted, thrown forward at a double-quick, and soon sharply engaged. Lyon dismounted the Seventh Kentucky, except two companies held as cavalry on the flanks, and advanced in a line with the Third. The Eighth Kentucky was held as a reserve in the rear of the center. Lyon soon drew a heavy fire from the artillery and small arms, but kept up the aggressive for some time, and then fell back. Forrest sent a courier to Old Carrollville, eight miles away, with orders to forward the artillery at a gallop, and to detach Barteau's Second Tennessee to gain the Federal rear and destroy their train, if possible.

Some of the best trained and most skilful officers and gallant veterans of the Union army were in Forrest's front, men who had fought him in West Tennessee, and at Okolona and Iveys Farm, and knew his tactics. The immediate front was composed of Waring's brigade, one thousand four hundred and fifty strong on the left, and Winslow's, of one thousand seven hundred and fifty on the right, with four pieces of artillery placed in position early in the morning, and six guns held in reserve. And thus the opposing forces met and faced each other across the fields and in the woods. Forrest was first playing for time, and after Lyon made a show of fighting and fell back, he had the fences laid down as if preparing for a general charge. About ten o'clock Lyon assumed the offensive with two regiments, and succeeded in driving the enemy back three hundred yards. Forrest placed the Seventh and Eighth Kentucky slightly in advance, and to the right on the road. Rucker dismounted and took a position in line of battle, and was soon warmly engaged. Johnson's brigade, mounted, was placed on Lyon's right, and the battle seemed fairly opened. Morton's and Rice's batteries came eight miles on a run and took position in

an open field in the rear of Lyon, and opened with spirit. Duff's Mississippians were thrown half a mile to the left to guard that flank, and Captain W. A. Tyler, with two companies of Kentuckians, was sent to the left, and also a company under Captain W. D. Stratton, detached from the Nineteenth Tennessee. Rucker charged across an open field with the Seventh Tennessee and the Eighteenth Mississippi battalion, in the face of a heavy force of infantry. The battalion on the left was unsupported, and driven back by a heavy enfilading fire. Rucker, however, rallied his line, and in conjunction with Lieutenant-Colonels William F. Taylor, of the Seventh Tennessee, and Alexander H. Chalmers, of the Mississippi battalion, made another onset which was more successful, though at heavy loss. The Seventh Tennessee lost about one-third its strength in killed and wounded. Lyon had advanced well in the face of a heavy fire, but with severe losses.

Buford came on the field at about half-past twelve P. M. with Russell's and Wilson's regiments of Bell's brigade, and Forrest placed them on Rucker's left. Buford was assigned to the command of the right and center, which included Lyon's and Johnson's brigades and the artillery, eight guns, with instructions to throw in his entire force as soon as Bell was heard on the left. Bell advanced to the onset about half-past one o'clock. The Federals occupied ground somewhat higher than that of the Confederates, and it was slightly undulating and thickly shaded by stunted trees and tangled vines. Temporary breastworks of logs and rails had been thrown up hastily by the Federals. Bell received a galling fire; Wilson's regiment on the extreme left was enfiladed and repulsed, and many officers and men fell in the struggle. For a time the issue seemed to be against the Confederates, but the lines were rallied, and at the supreme moment Lieutenant-

Colonel Wisdom, with about two hundred and fifty men of Newsom's regiment, came upon the field, and formed, dismounted, on Wilson's left. Forrest had admonished the men that this was to be no feint, but a fight to the death for victory. An advance was made all along the line.

The Federals made charge after charge in fearless and gallant style, and as fresh troops were constantly arriving from the rear, the fates appeared to be greatly in their favor. But the Confederates fought on with desperation, and gained ground little by little. The lines came close together in Rucker's front, and when he was about to be driven back, his men drew their revolvers and closed in on their assailants, driving them back with heavy loss. In this hand-to-hand fight Forrest led his two escort companies on foot, and by his presence and fierce onslaught did much to inspire the men and roll back the tide of battle. Soon after this he ordered Morton's battery to the front, where there was not even a support, but he opened with double canister shot with startling effect. Four of the guns were rolled by hand down a wooded slope to within sixty yards of the Federals at the edge of a small field, a quarter of a mile northeast of the Brice house, and opened on a line just as it was resuming the offensive. Johnson and Lyon charged successfully on the right, where the battle raged with great fury, and Bell's and Rucker's brigades finally swept everything before them on the left. The Confederate line was shortened but strengthened as it converged upon the center of the field. After nearly two hours' furious fighting, the Federals were forced westward of Brice's into a bottom where infantry, cavalry, and artillery were huddled in a confused mass under a deadly fire from Morton's and Rice's batteries. The battle was practically over before four o'clock. Meantime Barteau's Second Ten-

nessee, only two hundred and fifty strong, by taking a circuitous route, had succeeded in reaching the Federal rear about the time the battle was at its height. His presence was quickly known to the Federals and to Forrest's men on the extreme flanks, and was in great part the cause of the loss of the wagon-train. Colonel Barteau says: "I succeeded in reaching the Federal rear just as the fighting seemed heaviest in front. I at once deployed my men in a long line, had my bugler ride up and down sounding the charge at different points, and kept up as great a show as I could, and a vigorous fire upon the Federals until their complete rout was evident. I was on the flank and rear of their position when Waring's and Winslow's brigades came back." This daring movement created great commotion not only in the reserve brigade of infantry and colored troops guarding the train, but drew off all of Grierson's cavalry that could be spared from the front. After that it became a race for the bridge, where over a hundred Federals were killed.

Two miles from the battle-field Colonel McMillin rallied portions of the First and Second Brigades between five and six o'clock, at the residence of Dr. E. Agnew, and made a resolute resistance for fifty or sixty minutes, enabling many of the Union forces to pass out through his lines. But this, the last stand worthy of the name, was quickly abandoned when opened upon by Morton's artillery.

The bridge for a time was blocked with dead men, wagons, and animals, and the fleeing troops plunged into the stream above and below, and as they came out in the field on the west side they were at once subjected to a heavy fire from small arms and artillery. It was difficult to clear the bridge, but a section of Rice's battery was worked across and opened upon the negro brigade held in reserve, and when the way was better

opened other artillery followed and joined in the pursuit. An order was given by Forrest for the cavalry to halt, reorganize, and pursue. This was done promptly and effectively. The artillery continued for some distance to play an important part. Forrest's force in the field at the time of the most serious work of the day was about two thousand eight hundred and eighty men. Every regiment was dismounted. Deducting horse-holders, he had in this last desperate concentrated effort about seventeen hundred men and two batteries—Morton's and Rice's—one hundred and sixty men.

The night after the battle of Brice's crossroads General Forrest was urging the pursuit of Sturgis's flying column with all his wonted energy. Coming upon a squadron of his men at a creek, who had stopped in the near presence of what appeared to be a strong rear-guard, he asked what the trouble was, and was told that the Federal rear-guard stood at bay a few rods in front. He at once took from his pocket a small piece of candle, lighted it, and held it over his head, to the terror of his men, who feared it would cost him his life. "What is that?" he asked, pointing to some object in the water. "A wagon," was the reply. "And that?" "A gun." "Come on, men!" he shouted, plunging into the creek. "In a rout like this ten men are equal to a thousand. They will not stop to fight." And so it proved, as the daring horseman led the pursuit for several hours in the darkness without adventure. Late that evening several commands were assembled west of Tishomingo Creek, and about one o'clock on the morning of the 11th, Forrest gave orders to resume the pursuit. Rucker's brigade, with the Seventh Tennessee in the lead, was in front, and within three miles at daylight came up with the Federal rear-guard at Stubbs Farm. After a slight skir-

mish the enemy fled, leaving the remainder of their wagon-train, nine pieces of artillery, and twenty-five ambulances, as well as some wounded.

The Federals were greatly scattered over the country, and Forrest threw out a regiment on each side of the road as much to gather up firearms and other desirable property as prisoners. Rucker's horses were exhausted, and Bell's brigade took the lead. Four miles east of Ripley the Federals were found drawn up west of Hatchie Creek, with skirmishers in the woods near the stream. Forrest dismounted two of Bell's regiments, moved leftward up the creek, crossed over and flanked the Federals out of their position after a slight skirmish. The Federals made a stand at Ripley in some force. Wilson's regiment, the advance of Bell's brigade, reached there about 8 A. M. Forrest came up with his escort, and joined Wilson in a successful charge. The enemy fled, leaving thirty dead and sixty wounded on the field, including Lieutenant-Colonel George M. McCaig, One Hundred and Twentieth Illinois Infantry. Buford came up with Rucker's and Lyon's brigades, and continued the pursuit toward Salem. Many more prisoners were taken. Forrest went forward with Bell's brigade by a different road. Near Salem, a few miles from the home of his youth, he fell from his horse from exhaustion, and was unconscious for more than an hour. That night he rested with staff and escort at the house of Orrin Beck, a maternal uncle. The pursuit grew weaker as men and horses were exhausted, but it was continued in the direction of Memphis about fifty-eight miles. Bell's brigade which left Rienzi at 4 A. M. on the 10th, marched twenty-five miles to Brice's crossroads, fought from 2 P. M. to 4 P. M., joined in the pursuit, and on the night of the 11th camped at Davis Mill, twelve miles north of Salem, a distance of eighty-five

miles from the starting-point. Other commands were distinguished likewise. Morton's artillery ran eighteen miles to reach the battle-field, was engaged five hours, joined in the pursuit, and reached Salem on the night of the 11th, having made sixty-one miles in thirty-eight hours. So great was the strain that fifteen of his horses fell dead in the pursuit.

The Federals made all possible haste on the return to Memphis. The cavalry had the advantage and the infantry suffered more heavily. Waring's cavalry brigade lost only two hundred and seven, and Winslow's one hundred and twenty-six. The colored troops, it was reported afterward, wore badges inscribed "Remember Fort Pillow." Few, if any, of the badges were captured on the prisoners, and the facts were not known to Forrest's men until after the battle. Some of the pursuers, including a small detachment from Newsom's Nineteenth Tennessee regiment, reached Grand Junction and La Grange, though not in force. Brice's crossroads is now Bethany, as a post-office in Lee County, Miss. The battle was fought in what was then Pontotoc County, and extended nearly three miles into Tippah County, on the road to Ripley, the county seat.

The spoils taken by Forrest's men were abundant and of the finest quality. General Sturgis's headquarters wagon fell into the hands of the victors, and in it were morning reports showing ten thousand two hundred and sixty-five men on the muster-rolls, but probably not all present for duty. He reported afterward that four hundred, including one hundred cavalry, were sent back from Stubbs Farm.

The Federal medical department was especially well stocked with everything required for the treatment of soldiers on the battle-field and in hospitals. Five splendid new ambulances, loaded with valuable

stores, were sent through the country under guard to General Johnston's army in Georgia.

General Sturgis made quick time back to Memphis, reaching Collierville in forty-eight hours. All his soldiers were in a most dilapidated condition. It was a matter of great mortification to him and to his gallant officers that they were so defeated, and the general was afterward subjected to harsh criticism and inquiry before a military court, and, although not formally deposed for his unavoidable defeat he was not again given an opportunity to so distinguish himself. General Sherman had severely censured General William Sooy Smith* for allowing himself to be badly worsted by Forrest at West Point, Okolona, and Prairie Station in the latter part of February, 1864. Sturgis did not fare much better, and little more was heard of him during the war. Had he secured that one "little lock of hair" his reputation would have been secure.

On the 12th of June Forrest returned slowly to Ripley, remained there that night, and reached Brice's crossroads on the morning of the 13th. His first order was for the removal of the wounded of both sides to hospitals on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, and the next one required brigade commanders to make detailed reports of all captured property. On the same afternoon he established headquarters at Guntown, where he was soon actively engaged in the reorganization of his command. A few days later he repaired to Tupelo. About that time Roddey's force was placed under Forrest, and ordered to Corinth, leaving three hundred men in north Alabama.

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* Forrest's command called him "Sookey Smith," while General Andrew J. Smith was known amoug them as "Old Baldy," by way of distinction.

In a report dated at Memphis, June 24th, General Sturgis gave his losses in killed, wounded, and missing at two thousand two hundred and forty, but the reports of brigade and regimental commanders make a total of two thousand six hundred and twelve.

Chief Surgeon Dr. J. B. Cowan, of General Forrest's staff, reported four hundred and ninety-two killed and wounded on the Confederate side. Rucker's brigade lost twenty-three per cent and Lyon's over twenty per cent in killed and wounded. The general commanding, in an address to his soldiers, claimed as the results of the victory seventeen guns, two hundred and fifty wagons, three thousand stand of arms, three hundred thousand rounds of small-arm ammunition, two thousand prisoners, and killed and wounded two thousand.* He paid a high tribute to the gallantry of his men as well as to Brigadier-General Buford, commanding division, and to brigade-commanders Colonels E. W. Rucker, W. A. Johnson, Lyon, and Bell, Captain John W. Morton, chief of artillery, and to staff-officers Major C. W. Anderson, Captain W. H. Brand, and Lieutenants Clay, Sam. Donelson, Titus, and M. C. Gallaway. Forrest could well congratulate his men upon such a remarkable victory over the best troops of the Union army in greatly superior numbers. Away from his immediate superior commander he planned the battle, and it was fought and won in an incredibly short space of time. There was no time or place during the action when he was not outnumbered except at the last, when the retreat began. His forces, although scattered at first and weary from long marches, were brought together and handled with consummate tact and judgment. The general fully grasped the situation, and seized a rare opportunity to win a

* Rebellion Records, Series 1, vol. xxxix, p. 228.

victory which was without parallel during the war, as conceded by leading generals on both sides. This was doubtless Forrest's greatest achievement from a military standpoint, and the climax of his hard-earned fame. The Confederacy was losing strength, and every battle or skirmish only hastened its inevitable downfall.

CHAPTER XV.

SEVERE REPULSE AT HARRISBURG, JULY 14, 1864.

THE Union leaders in the field, as well as the authorities at Washington, realized at once the serious import of the disaster at Brice's crossroads, and resolved to retrieve it at any cost or hazard. General Grant, in his Memoirs, says: "Forrest had met Sturgis in command of some cavalry in Mississippi, and had used him very roughly, gaining a great victory over him. . . . Two divisions under A. J. Smith had been sent to Louisiana some months before. Sherman ordered these back, with directions to attack Forrest."* This was part of a prompt movement in force, leading to the battle of Harrisburg, fought on the 14th of July on a hill above and west of Tupelo.

Secretary of War Stanton on the 14th of June telegraphed General Sherman that he had just received the report of the battle between Sturgis and Forrest, "in which our forces were defeated with great loss. Washburn estimates our loss at not less than three thousand." Sherman replied: "I have ordered A. J. Smith not to go to Mobile, but to go to Memphis and to defeat Forrest at all costs. Forrest has only his cavalry. I can not understand how he could defeat Sturgis with eight thousand men. . . . I know I would have been willing to attempt the same task with that force; but Forrest is the devil, and I think he has got some of our

* Memoirs of General Grant, vol. ii, p. 306.

troops under cower. I have two officers at Memphis who will fight all the time—A. J. Smith and Mower. I will order them to make up a force and go out to follow Forrest to the death, if it costs ten thousand lives and breaks the Treasury. There never will be peace in Tennessee until Forrest is dead."* Again he telegraphed to Stanton on the 20th as to Forrest: "He whipped Sturgis fair and square, and now I have got against him A. J. Smith and Mower, and will let them try their hands." On the 24th of June General Sherman sent a message to President Lincoln, in which he said: "I have ordered General A. J. Smith and General Mower from Memphis to pursue and kill Forrest, promising the latter, in case of success, my influence to promote him to a major-general."

Forrest had surely grown to be a disturbing factor and a menace to the rear of Sherman's army when it was deemed necessary to make such an offer to secure his destruction. Not only this, but his presence on the field detained Union forces at Decatur, at Nashville, and various other points which might otherwise have been employed rapidly and successfully to crush out what was left of the Southern Confederacy, which even then was gasping for breath, and was so soon to pass into the shadows of history. Never commanding more than five thousand men in any action, Forrest mobilized his skeleton regiments and fought them either as mounted infantry or dismounted cavalry, and so often changed front and used his artillery as the picket line, that it required a largely superior force to look after him. Hence the importance now of engaging his attention by a strong movement quickly organized to destroy him if possible.

Of the several commanders sent out to vanquish

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxviii, part iv, p. 480.

Forrest, General A. J. Smith was, perhaps, one of the ablest, and, in conjunction with Brigadier-General Joseph A. Mower, who was offered the brilliant prize of a major-generalship, he moved forth, resolved not to be surprised, and in this he succeeded. His force consisted of thirty-two hundred cavalry under Grierson, eleven thousand infantry, twenty-four pieces of artillery, and five hundred artillerists. Brigadier-General Mower commanded the First Division, Sixteenth Army-corps; Colonel David Moore commanded the Third Division, and Colonel Edward Bouton commanded the First Brigade of the United States colored troops, Major-General A. J. Smith being in chief command. The expedition moved out from La Grange, forty-nine miles east of Memphis, on the 5th day of July, 1864, passed through Ripley on the 8th, crossed the Tallahatchie at New Albany on the 9th, and camped on the night of the 10th five miles north of Pontotoc. Thus far there had been no serious resistance. The Confederate outpost at Ripley, some six hundred strong, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Hyams, First Mississippi Partizans, had been thrown forward on the 7th, and skirmished with Smith's advance, but fell back through Ripley to Ellistown, fifteen miles to the northwestward of Tupelo. Generals Lee and Forrest had been making headquarters and concentrating some troops at Okolona, and Chalmers, who had returned from Alabama, was ordered forward to Pontotoc and reached that neighborhood on the 11th, with orders to skirmish sharply and detain the enemy's advance if possible for two days, and he disposed his two brigades accordingly on the different roads.

The Federal column advanced in parallelogram form with line of battle flanked by cavalry, wagons in the center, infantry and cavalry in the rear. Lyon's

brigade was encountered at Pontotoc, and pressed back slowly, but only a few miles' progress was made that day. General Forrest was on the field, and was joined by the commander of the department. The road in front ran for two miles through a swamp, and Chalmers's force made such resistance that General Smith abandoned the idea of marching to Okolona, and on the morning of the 13th he turned to the left almost a right angle, and moved toward Tupelo, eighteen miles eastward. His skirmishers on the Okolona road were called in, and the rear was brought up by the colored brigade and the Seventh Kansas Cavalry. His object was to secure possession of the railroad at Tupelo, and thus be able to select his own battle-ground. There was sharp skirmishing on the line of march nearly all day, and when within about eight miles of Pontotoc General Chalmers, by order of General Lee, made a bold attack on the flank of the train, which was successful only to the extent of destroying seven wagons and some caissons and ambulances, and killing twenty-seven mules. The Confederates were repulsed with losses. Colonel Duff, commanding a Mississippi regiment, was wounded, and lost forty-seven killed and wounded. General Buford also made an attack on the flank farther up the road, but without success. General Forrest brought up the rear until nine o'clock at night, when he reached a point two miles from Harrisburg, near Tupelo, and there employed Mabry's brigade and four pieces of artillery to feel the enemy. At a later hour he went to the front, accompanied only by a staff-officer, Lieutenant Samuel Donelson, made a wide detour for an hour or more, rode through the pickets and teamsters unnoticed at first, discovered the strong position of the Federals, and only escaped by a dash back through the woods at full speed and under fire. The train was parked two miles west of

Tupelo, and General Grierson held the town and railroad.

The Federal line, about a mile and a half long, was in a semicircle form on a low ridge running north and south, and faced west toward Pontotoc. The left rested near the railroad south of Tupelo, and the right half a mile north of Harrisburg. There was much open space and lightly timbered land in front through which the Confederates would have to advance. At some points they would be in plain view for a distance of five hundred or a thousand yards. General Smith had made a good selection of position, and it was well strengthened during the night. The twenty-four guns were advantageously placed, and there was a cavalry brigade on each flank. General Smith was ready for battle. While General Lee was not, with the limited force at his command, yet he was compelled for various reasons to bring on an engagement. His department was menaced by movements from Vicksburg and north Alabama, which he felt compelled to meet, and if he had to leave Forrest he would be obliged to withdraw some of his troops on the field. Forrest never acquiesced in the resolve of his superior, and declined to accept the command tendered him for the day. The Confederate line of battle was arranged with Roddey's division—Patterson's and Johnson's brigades—on the extreme right; Colonel Crossland, commanding brigade of Kentuckians next to the left in the center, but on the right of the road; Rice's battery, Bell's brigade next, and Mabry's brigade, with one section of Morton's battery, on the extreme left flank of the fighting line. The other section of Morton's battery was under command of Lieutenant Tully Brown, to the left of the road to Harrisburg. The reserve was composed of McCulloch's brigade, and Neely's and Gholson's dismounted men, an infantry force of seven hundred under General

Lyon, and Thrall's, Ferrell's, and Hudson's batteries. The Confederate forces on the field in front and in reserve were, as near as can be ascertained, as follows:

Chalmers's division, composed of McCulloch's and Rucker's brigades	2,300
Buford's division, Bell's, Lyon's, and Mabry's brigades	3,200
Roddey's division, Patterson's and Johnson's brigades	1,500
Lyon's infantry division:	
Beltzhooven's battalion of infantry	900
Gholson's (dismounted) brigade	600
Neely's " "	600
Artillerists, 20 guns	360
Total	9,460

The infantry were in line of battle, but partly in reserve. Deducting horse-holders, the available Confederate force was about seventy-five hundred, though not half engaged during the day.

General Forrest had sufficient cause to decline the command offered him on account of his ill-health if for nothing else. He had been suffering for some time, and two weeks previously had requested General Lee to relieve him. Without actual command, he was given his choice, and elected to go in the fight with Roddey's division on the right.

By seven o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the Confederates were in order of battle facing directly east, and moved up to the timber-line where they halted, and firing was opened at long range both from small arms and artillery, and was continued without serious effect for an hour. At eight o'clock General Lee directed General Forrest to ride down to the right and swing Roddey's division around on the Union left. This movement, however, was confronted by heavy reenforcements which General Smith could easily spare from other parts of his lines, and General For-

rest reached the conclusion that it would be best to hold Roddey in check. So there was no assault made on the Union left. The lines were not nearer together than four hundred yards. A part of Buford's division advanced prematurely and overconfidently. Crossland's Kentucky brigade rushed ahead of the main line, and was soon under a terrific fire. The men seemed reckless of life, and without fear or reason. Their officers had little control over them. The artillery was served with fine effect, but the dismounted cavalry regiments and brigades went in without method, to be shot down by platoons and sections. Again and again they fell back, rallied, and charged, always with terrible losses. The brigades were not alined so as to cooperate. The enemy could see this, and quickly took advantage of the irregularity with which the main charges were made. No general plan was observed after the first shock of battle. It was a scorching hot day; the beds of streams were dry; vegetation burned to a crisp; the sultry air, laden with dust and sand, and a red July sky glowed through sulfurous, lazy smoke upon fields where the cyclones of battle had met to wrestle. In this fierce, remorseless work mere personal valor and deeds of daring were of no avail. For two hours the contest raged, and not a point on the Union line had been broken, although the fragments of brigades charged time after time up within a few yards of the breastworks and were shot down, until regiments looked like mere skirmish lines. The award for rash courage could not be claimed for any one command. Crossland's Kentuckians, Bell's Tennesseeans, McCulloch's Missourians and others, Mabry's Mississippians, Morton's, Rice's, and Thrall's artillerymen all threw themselves into the supreme struggle with an abandon that has seldom been recorded in the history of civilized peoples. The straggling commands going up the hill

across an open field drew a concentrated fire from more than five times, or even ten times, their number. It was Crossland's brigade of seven hundred men first, then Bell's, and then Mabry's. Rucker, the stubborn fighter, was ordered to take the place of Mabry, but when within fifty yards of the Federal lines was twice wounded and his men driven back, leaving the ground strewn with the dead and dying. McCulloch's brigade was ordered to the support of Crossland, but recalled before it reached the fatal zone of battle in the center of the field. Forrest moved Roddey's command to Crossland's original position, but further advance was not to be thought of. The commands engaged went in by piecemeal and were slaughtered by wholesale. At the end of two hours' desperate fighting, without organization or skilful handling, the Confederates were repulsed at every point. It was all gallantry and useless sacrifice of life. General Mower advanced his lines a quarter of a mile, and thus ended a bloody battle and costly mistake. The attack having failed with disastrous results, the Confederates fell back to the position held early in the morning, leaving McCulloch in advance, where he remained several hours.

General Forrest never questioned the judgment or authority of his superior officer in command, or complained afterward, but he said on the field and elsewhere that it was not his fight, and that if it had been successful General Lee would have been entitled to the credit of the plan and its execution. The Confederate loss in killed and wounded officers was especially heavy. In Mabry's brigade, Colonel Isham Harrison; Lieutenant-Colonel John B. Cage, Fourteenth Confederate; Thomas M. Nelson, Sixth Mississippi, and Major Robert C. McCay, Thirty-eighth Mississippi, were killed. In Bell's brigade, Colonels C. R. Barteau, A. N. Wilson, R. M. Russell, and J. F. Newsom were

wounded, also Lieutenant-Colonel Wisdom and Major Parham. Colonel Faulkner, of the Twelfth Kentucky, was twice wounded, and left on the field. Colonel Rucker was twice wounded, and had to be carried away after leading his men to within fifty yards of the Federal works. At least one-third of his small brigade was lost in killed and wounded or by the heat. The few Confederates who crossed the works were killed or captured. Lieutenant Willie Forrest was thrown from his horse by the concussion of a shell which exploded over his head, and had to be carried to the rear. The section of Morton's battery commanded by Lieutenant Tully Brown shared the advance and losses of Bell's and Mabry's brigades. Five out of the seven gunners and six of the eight horses of one gun, were struck down, and Sergeant Brown, its commander, was three times wounded, but the gun was drawn to the rear by the sharpshooters of Captain Titus's company, and Brown came out with it. Another piece was also brought off by hand after one of its wheels had been shot away. All the batteries were brought into action during the engagement, and handled effectively both at the front and from long range.

Late in the afternoon General Forrest moved Rucker's brigade, now under Colonel Duckworth, from the extreme left, with four pieces of artillery southward on the Verona road, and had a sharp skirmish with the Federal left, artillery being freely used on both sides. Late in the evening the brigade went into bivouac three miles south of Tupelo. Buford was also moved in the same direction in anticipation of an attack the next morning.

General Smith was still expected to move toward Okolona to destroy the railroad and other property, but on the morning of the 15th he decided that it had become a necessity to return. The movement was be-

gun about noon. The retreat was soon discovered, and Bell's brigade, with Rice's battery, was ordered to follow and press the rear vigorously. He came up with the rear-guard, commanded by General Mower, at Old Town Creek, four miles northwest of Tupelo, on the Ellistown road, and made an attack which was repulsed with considerable loss, including Colonel L. J. Sherrell, of the Seventh Kentucky, killed, and Colonel Crossland, brigade commander, desperately wounded. Rice's battery also suffered severely. Forrest came up with McCulloch's brigade at a gallop, dismounted the force, and made a partly successful charge, in which he was painfully wounded in the right foot, and Colonel McCulloch wounded in the shoulder. General Chalmers made a flank movement on the left with Kelley's regiment, but was forced to fall back. McCulloch's attack created a diversion for a short time, and saved Buford's horses and artillery. Forrest's wound was so painful that he was obliged to return to Tupelo and have it dressed, leaving Chalmers in command. General Lee went to the front and ordered McCulloch's brigade to bivouac within half a mile of Town Creek. Buford's division was close by, and the other commands were between these and Tupelo. The morning of the 16th found them all still greatly exhausted. Men and horses were broken down after three days' hard marching and fighting.

Chalmers was directed to follow the Federals with Rucker's and Roddey's brigades and a section of artillery, which he did for one day only, and engaged in some skirmishing. Two hundred and fifty men were detached to continue the pursuit toward Memphis. Thus reduced, his command returned to Tupelo. General Smith marched rapidly to Memphis by way of Holly Springs; Mower brought up the rear. The main reason assigned for the retreat after repulsing such an

attack, was shortness of rations, only one day's supply being left. In his report General Smith says:

"We reached Salem on the 19th, where we found supplies awaiting our arrival." This was three days after the last brush with Chalmers.

General Forrest, in his report, says: "The enemy continued his retreat, and was pursued for two days by Rucker and Roddey. My force during the engagement did not exceed five thousand men. The enemy fought behind fortifications and in positions of his own selection. Three of my brigade commanders, Rucker, McCulloch, and Crossland, were seriously wounded, and all the colonels were either killed or wounded—two hundred and ten were killed, one thousand one hundred and sixteen wounded." A detailed report for the 13th, 14th, and 15th of July, by commands, shows losses as follows:

Chalmers's division, killed, 57; wounded, 255....	312
Buford's, including Mabry's brigade, killed, 153; wounded, 798.....	951
Remnant (80) of Morgan's detachment, Kentucky cavalry, killed, 5; wounded, 19.....	24
Morton's artillery, killed, 1; wounded, 9.....	10
Missing from Buford.....	48
Missing from Morgan's detachment.....	2
Total.....	1,347

The percentage of mortality appears greater when it is considered that so many Confederates in line of battle never fired a shot. General Lyon's reserve force of twenty-one hundred men was not in range of the battle. McCulloch's brigade, fourteen hundred strong, was ordered forward to take Crossland's place, but was not engaged. Roddey's division, fifteen hundred, was only engaged with skirmishers at a range of four hundred yards. Over five thousand did not take part in this bloody affair.

The losses of some Confederate commands were especially heavy. Out of Crossland's eight hundred men in the field, including horse-holders, two hundred and seventy-six were killed or wounded; only thirty were reported as missing. All this occurred in less than an hour and a half's actual fighting. Mabry's brigade of seven hundred and fifty men in the charge left one-third on the field killed and wounded. Such percentages were seldom heard of except in a few of the greatest battles of the war, such as Gettysburg, Chickamauga, and Franklin. The severest loss ever known was at Gettysburg, when a Confederate regiment lost seven hundred and twenty out of eight hundred men, or ninety per cent.

General Smith reported his casualties as nine officers killed or mortally wounded, sixty-nine men killed, and five hundred and fifty-eight wounded; total, six hundred and thirty-six.

CHAPTER XVI.

A DARING RAID ON MEMPHIS.

General Forrest suffered more from the wound received in his big toe at Old Town Creek on the 15th of July than from any of the numerous injuries sustained during the war. For some weeks before the battle of Harrisburg he had been afflicted with boils and other troubles consequent upon hard fare and the great strain of body and mind endured in three years' service. He remained at Tupelo only twenty-four hours to give orders as to the care of the wounded, burial of the dead, collection of small arms on the battle-fields and the disposition of troops. No longer able to ride on horseback, he secured a buggy, and continued to give his personal attention to necessary details. Leaving Brigadier-General Chalmers in command, he went by rail to Okolona, where he remained until the 22d, and then returned to Tupelo. General S. D. Lee was transferred to Hood's army on the 20th, and General Dabney H. Maury succeeded him temporarily. The troops were scattered: those in the State service reported to the Governor of Mississippi at Jackson; Roddey's division was sent by rail to Montgomery on the 28th to meet a reported invasion in the interior of Alabama; Mabry's brigade was ordered the same day to repair mounted to Canton, Miss., to assist in repelling another Federal movement; Buford and Chalmers were sent to Egypt Station and other points in the neighborhood convenient to forage and sub-

sistence, and other commands were also located with a view to recuperation. The small battalion of infantry present at Harrisburg was returned to Mobile. Depots for supplies were established, the scouting service was reorganized, fortifications were put under construction at Prairie Mound, and active measures taken to remount the men who had lost their horses, and to secure the return of absentees. General Forrest returned to Okolona on the 1st of August, but was still suffering greatly.

General Chalmers, on the 1st day of August, reported to the chief of staff of the department that preparations were being made by the Federals to move from Memphis, Vicksburg, and north Alabama at the same time, and, if successful, to concentrate at Selma, and stated that scouts reported fourteen thousand infantry and cavalry already assembled at La Grange. "Our effective force," he concluded, "is five thousand three hundred and fifty-seven, but we are very much crippled in officers. Both of my brigade commanders are wounded, also a brigade commander of General Buford's division, and most of the field-officers of the command were either killed or wounded in the late engagement." General Forrest resumed command on the 3d of August, and on the same day General Chalmers set out with his staff escort, Thrall's battery, and McCulloch's brigade through Pontotoc for Oxford, about fifty miles distant. The command was supplied with one hundred rounds of ammunition for small arms, and two hundred for the artillery. On the 4th Neely's brigade was also despatched toward Oxford with orders to impress negroes to the number of five hundred, with axes, spades, etc., to construct fortifications at Graysport, Abbeville, and other places on the Tallahatchie River, and to obstruct roads and fords in the river not so fortified. Mabry's brigade, recalled

from the direction of Canton, was ordered to Grenada with similar instructions.

General Smith's return to Memphis claiming a great victory over Forrest, but followed even by weakened Confederate commands, did not give entire satisfaction to Grant and Sherman. Forrest was reported to be dead when he was only crippled and riding around in an old buggy with his foot propped up on the dashboard. General Mower had not quite killed Forrest, but he was promoted to major-general. Sherman's pledge was made good. On the 12th of April he telegraphed to Stanton: "Please convey to the President my thanks for the commission for General Mower, whose task was to kill Forrest. He only crippled him. He is a young and game officer." General Smith soon made another advance from Memphis, but not intending to go as far from his base as before. By the 9th of August he had reached the Tallahatchie River between Holly Springs and Oxford, and was accompanied by Generals Mower and Grierson with a force of ten thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, three thousand colored troops from Memphis, and three Minnesota regiments sent from St. Louis. The cavalry moved across the country and the infantry by rail as far as Holly Springs, going by way of Grand Junction. The distance from Holly Springs to Oxford, south, was thirty miles, and the Tallahatchie River was crossed about half-way between the two places. General Chalmers destroyed bridges and trestles below Holly Springs, and took a position south of the river. Fighting stubbornly, he was pushed back to Oxford by the 10th of August, and was found there by Forrest with Bell's and Neely's brigades and Morton's artillery. An advance was made and a position taken at Hurricane Creek, eight miles out from Oxford, and fighting was kept up almost continuously for three days.

On the morning of the 13th the Confederates found themselves flanked by a heavy force, and fell back to Oxford. Forrest was well aware before he left Okolona that he could not successfully meet the forces in his front, and his mind was busy planning a countermovement. The Federals had repaired the Mississippi Central Railroad as far as Waterford, eight miles south of Holly Springs. As early as the 8th of August Forrest wrote to Chalmers inquiring as to the facilities for crossing the river at Panola west of Oxford, and the number of boats to be found there. Buford was twenty-five miles away on the right, at Pontotoc, to guard against a flank movement in that direction. The way seemed to be open on the extreme left for a move on Memphis. Chalmers fell back across a swollen stream a few miles south of Oxford, but kept up demonstrations in different directions, and occupied the attention of the Federals. On Monday, August 15th, he led a detachment of some two hundred picked men from Neely's brigade on a reconnaissance; drove in the enemy's pickets on the Abbeville road, and dashed into the town and developed a large infantry force which retreated at first in some confusion, but was soon drawn up in line of battle. Seeing this, Chalmers withdrew his little force without loss. By the evening of the 17th it became known through scouts that the Federal commander had repaired the railroad as far as Abbeville, collected supplies, laid a pontoon bridge across the Tallahatchie, and was ready to advance southward. Buford was ordered to repair with his division to Oxford to cooperate with Chalmers.

Forrest was again able to take to the saddle, but had to carry his foot in a sling. On the morning of the 18th, after freely consulting General Chalmers and other officers, he resolved to set in motion a carefully considered plan to attack Memphis. Two thousand of

the best men in Bell's and Neely's brigades, and Morton's battery of artillery, were selected for the expedition. About five hundred men were rejected on account of their mounts being too weak for the forced marches before them. Late in the afternoon this command of fifteen hundred men, besides the staff, escort, and artillerymen, rode to the west in a pelting rain, which had been falling several days. After hard riding in mud, water, and rain the command reached Senatobia, in Tate County, by seven o'clock on the morning of the 20th. One mile north of this place it became necessary to construct a bridge over Hickahala Creek. Forrest sent in advance a detachment to cut down two trees on each side of the stream, and to make cables of grape and muscadine vines to be fastened to the stumps of the felled trees. A small ferry-boat was anchored in the center of the stream, and the cables rested on this. Cypress logs were used to further support the cables. As General Forrest approached he sent details to neighboring gin-houses and cabins to strip them of their floors. The planks were laid across the cables, making a substantial though swinging bridge, and the entire command dismounted and led their horses in columns of twos over this swinging, trembling, grape-vine network. Two pieces of artillery had been left at Panola owing to the terrible condition of the roads and great strain upon the animals. The other two guns, pulled by ten horses each up- and down-hill on the expedition throughout, were here unlimbered and carried over by hand. Forrest, upon reaching the south bank of the creek, lame as he was, had dismounted to direct every movement, and even took part in tying the cables to the stumps and placing the planks brought up by the troopers. At the greater bridge of Lodi he would have been one of the first to pass over as he was here. No wonder

that he had such a following! When once started the command was safely across in about an hour. The construction of the improvised bridge occupied even less time than that. Seven miles northward the head of the column reached Coldwater, a turbulent, full stream twice as wide as Hickahala Creek. Again a ferry-boat was found, and anchored as a central float. Grapevines, gin-house floorings, and telegraph-poles were used without stint in the construction of another bridge on the same engineering principle as the other one. In about three hours this was ready also for use, and the passage of the command was speedily accomplished without a casualty. Forrest pushed on as rapidly as possible, and at sundown on the 20th reached Hernando, his old home, twenty-five miles south of Memphis, and rested a short time to feed and rest.

Scouts were met there who gave accurate information as to the strength and position of troops in and around Memphis, for it might be said of Forrest as of Tamerlane that: "On all occasions his march was preceded by clouds of flying scouts, who, piercing the country in every direction, kept him constantly informed as to its varied resources and the dispositions of the enemy." Fifteen miles farther on he was met by several citizens who gave him specific reports, especially as to the headquarters of prominent officers in Memphis. Henderson's famous scouts met the advance of the column at Cane Creek, four miles south of Memphis, and reported the position of the pickets on the road, and also stated that there were fully five thousand troops in and around the city.

Forrest's plan was to capture if possible the three generals known to be there, and the troops immediately around them, but not to attack Fort Pickering, a strong and well-garrisoned position. Incidentally

the troops might remount and equip themselves, but the main object was to recall the movement of General A. J. Smith southward. It was arranged for Captain William H. Forrest, the general's brother, with his independent company, to lead the advance, capture the pickets, rush into the Gayoso House and capture Major-General Hurlbut and such other officers as might be quartered there. Colonel T. H. Logwood, with a strong detachment from the Twelfth and Fifteenth Tennessee regiments, was to follow Captain Forrest to the Gayoso, and place details at Beale and Main and Beale and Shelby streets, just south of the hotel, and at the steamboat-landing at the foot of Union Street. Lieutenant-Colonel Jesse A. Forrest was to invest General C. C. Washburn's headquarters on Union Street; Colonel T. H. Bell, with detachments of Newsom's, Russell's, and Barteau's regiments, and two pieces of Morton's battery under Lieutenant Sale, were to compose the reserve under General Forrest in the suburbs to cover the movement and the retreat. The commanders of the skeleton brigades, regiments, and detachments were assembled, and the part to be taken by each one was fully explained. Separating in the darkness, they formed their troops into columns of fours. The strictest silence was enjoined upon all as being essential to the success of the daring venture to be made. Had this been observed the success of the first hour at least might have been more pronounced. A heavy fog prevailed, and it was a damp, sultry, starless night, propitious for such work by well-seasoned soldiers elated by a spirit of daring and sense of danger. Many of them were within rifle-shot of their homes, which they had not seen for many months.

A staff-officer made the rounds of each command and reported to General Forrest that all were closed up

and in place. At 3.15 A. M. Captain Forrest, with ten picked men some sixty paces in front of his company, led the advance. When within two miles of Court Square he was halted by the sharp challenge of a picket, and "Who comes there?" "Detachment of the Twelfth Missouri Cavalry with rebel prisoners." "Dismount, and advance one." Captain Forrest advanced without dismounting, and struck the picket down with a blow of his revolver. His men who were close at his heels, rushed by and captured the picket-post, ten or twelve men, some forty yards to the rear. One gun was discharged by a Union soldier. The prisoners were sent to Captain Forrest's rear, and he pushed on a quarter of a mile to the next post, where he was greeted by a volley, but dispersed the force encountered. The alarm was spreading, day was breaking, and as the Confederates came in sight of long rows of tents, they broke into wild cheering. Forrest gave the order to Gaus, his ever-faithful bugler, to sound the charge, and at this the troops selected for the purpose, dashed forward in the direction of the Gayoso. Captain Forrest ran into and dispersed the gunners of a battery, but did not think to spike the pieces. Reaching the Gayoso the captain entered without dismounting, and caused the house to be searched for officers of rank. Fortunately for Major-General S. A. Hurlbut he had not slept in the Gayoso the night before, but at the old Duval residence, used as a quartermaster's headquarters, on Shelby Street. Colonel Jesse A. Forrest likewise failed in his call for Major-General Washburn at the elegant Williams mansion on Union Street. Being warned by Lieutenant-Colonel M. H. Starr of the Sixth Illinois Cavalry, and the sound of guns, the general left his room suddenly by a back door, and escaped to Fort Pickering, three-quarters of a mile away, leaving his uniform and per-

sonal effects behind.* General Buckland, commanding the district of Memphis, likewise escaped from his residence on Court Street, and instead of running away, took an active part in rallying the available troops and militia for defense. The town was thrown into a state of great excitement. Forrest's men rushed wildly about with no apparent object in view, and the whole population was soon aroused. Confederate sympathizers, especially women and children who could safely do so, gave the invaders an exultant welcome. The Federals were forming in line, drums were beaten, officers and couriers flying hither and thither, and every movement punctuated by the sharp rattle of small arms and the ping-ping of bullets. To this was soon added the heavy boom of artillery in the suburbs and in the city. Logwood's command, following Captain Forrest, ran into a battery of artillery—the Seventh Wisconsin Battery, commanded by Captain Harry S. Lee — about where Looneys Switch is now located, the gunners of which he dispersed before they could fire the pieces they were charging; then he passed on to the Gayoso.

Neely's command in the suburbs was resisted by a strong infantry force. Forrest went to his assistance with Bell's brigade, and encountered a cavalry command. The joint attack was partly successful, as some prisoners were taken, and some of the infantry and dismounted cavalry were driven into the State Female College, from which a white flag was raised but pulled

* These were taken as trophies, but sent back that evening with the compliments of General Forrest. In acknowledging the favor General Washburn sent out gray cloth with buttons and lace to make Forrest and his staff full uniforms, and a beautiful sword for Major J. P. Strange, which is still preserved by the latter's family in Memphis.

down before a surrender could have taken place. Skirmishing followed, and Lieutenant Sale threw some shells into the building, but the attack was abandoned as the place could not have been taken without a great sacrifice of life.

Lieutenant-Colonel Logwood, while chatting pleasantly with some Federal officers at the Gayoso, was warned that infantry forces were closing in on him, and ordering Captain Hugh D. Greer, of the Twelfth Tennessee, to take the lead, he and the two Forrests moved rapidly under fire down Beale Street, out Hernando, near to the old Poston place, where he found Forrest in a heavy engagement. Making a dash to the right he circled around, rejoined Forrest, was in a skirmish for an hour or two, and then with the entire command fell back slowly toward Hernando. The Federals chased some stragglers out of the city, and attacked others of Forrest's men who were still lingering in an infantry camp. A detachment of the Sixth Illinois Cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Starr, made a vigorous attack on the rear-guard commanded by Forrest in person. The latter made a counter-charge, and the Federal commander was wounded on the firing line. After this incident there was no further pursuit. After crossing Cane Creek, Forrest sent Major Anderson with a flag of truce and a despatch to General Washburn proposing an exchange of prisoners; also stating that he had a number of captured officers and men who needed clothing. On the south side of Nonconnah Creek, six miles south of the city, Forrest received the reply that Washburn had no authority to exchange prisoners, but that he would send out clothing, which was done that day.

In the afternoon Lieutenant-Colonel W. P. Hepburn and Captain Harry S. Lee, officers of the Union army, who afterward lived in Memphis and were very

popular with the old soldiers of both sides, were sent out in the afternoon under a flag of truce, with wagons and an abundant supply of clothing for both the officers and men who had been captured, some six hundred in number, including citizens. After these comforts were distributed, the prisoners were examined by surgeons, and the able-bodied ones mounted on the led or supernumerary horses to accompany the command southward. The weak and disabled and all citizens were marched back across Nonconnah, and released under promise to observe the parole of combatants until regularly exchanged. General Forrest proceeded with his command and prisoners to Hernando, reaching there on the evening of the 21st. Before leaving Nonconnah he informed Lieutenant-Colonel Hepburn and Captain Lee that he would not be able to feed the prisoners, and wrote to General Washburn that as they could not be paroled they should, at least, be fed, and that his address would be Hernando for a few days. The next morning, the 22d, these same officers reached Hernando with two wagons well loaded with supplies. Two days' rations were issued to the prisoners, and one day's rations to the command. Settling down, apparently to stay some time, Forrest paroled four hundred prisoners as soon as the Federal officers left with their wagons, and by 8 A. M. he was on the march to Panola, reaching there about ten o'clock that night. On the 22d he went by rail with his staff and escort and one section of Morton's battery with the expedition to Grenada, where he established his headquarters. The other details returned to their respective brigades and divisions. Major-General C. C. Washburn, in his report of this affair, dated Memphis, September, 1864, gives his losses in killed, wounded, and missing: Officers and men as one hundred and ninety-six, not including about five hundred prisoners—one-hundred-

days' men as well as citizens, many of whom belonged to the militia.*

Brigadier-General R. P. Buckland, commanding the district, reported Federal losses at the time as officers killed, one; wounded, one; missing, four. Enlisted men killed, fourteen; wounded, fifty-nine; missing, supposed to be prisoners, one hundred and twelve; total, one hundred and ninety-six (not including citizens and militiamen). General Buckland, in his graphic report of the affair, dated August 24th, says:

"Before it was fairly light I was awakened by the sentinel at my residence by loud raps at the front door, with the exclamation, 'General, they are after you!' I jumped out of bed, and asked from the window, 'Who are after me?' and was answered, 'The rebels!' At the same time I heard musket shots in different directions. I dressed myself as speedily as possible, and ran to the barracks on the corner of Third and Jefferson streets, where I found the soldiers had been alarmed and were collecting in the street. I directed them to form in line as soon as possible, and then ran to the headquarters of the Second Regiment, E. M., to order the alarm-gun fired. At the corner of Third and Court streets I met Captain Alfred G. Tuther and Lieutenant M. T. Williamson, of my staff, who informed me that the enemy had made a demonstration at my headquarters, but upon being fired at by the sentinel at the door, killing one horse, retired to Main Street. While I was giving directions for the firing of the alarm-gun, General Charles W. Dustan, of the militia, came up with my headquarters guard and assisted in firing the gun. About the same time Lieutenant-Colonel Bell, commanding the Eighth Iowa, came out from the regimental head-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxix, part i, pp. 469–471.

quarters across the street, his companies being stationed in barracks in different parts of the city. The alarm-gun was speedily fired, and the officers and soldiers in the neighborhood soon rallied to the number, I should think, of one hundred and fifty. Just at this time Colonel Starr, of the Sixth Illinois Cavalry, informed me that General Washburn's headquarters were in possession of the enemy, and that the general was undoubtedly captured. Scattering shots of musketry were continually heard in different directions. My staff and orderlies soon rallied around me, and our horses were brought. I immediately ordered General Dustan to take charge of a detachment of the Irving Block Guards, from the One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois Infantry, and proceed to Union Street, east of General Washburn's quarters, and at the same time directed Lieutenant-Colonel Bell to take what men he had got together and proceed directly down Third Street and attack the enemy at General Washburn's headquarters, which was speedily done, myself and staff following Colonel Bell; but the enemy, as soon as they discovered this movement, retreated toward the Hernando road in great haste, pursued by General Dustan and Colonel Bell. It was supposed that General Washburn had been captured and carried off. Having no information as to the whereabouts, strength, or designs of the enemy, I returned to my headquarters and took immediate measures to rally and organize all the troops within reach. I sent Captain Tuther to watch and report operations of the enemy in the direction of the Hernando road, and other officers in other directions. Surgeon Rice was sent to see whether Colonel Kappner, commanding Fort Pickering, had notice of the presence of the enemy. About this time a prisoner was brought to me from whom I learned that Forrest in person was on the Hernando road with a large

force. I had given orders for the concentration of the troops stationed north and east of the city. Surgeon Rice soon returned with the gratifying intelligence that General Washburn had made his escape and was safe in the fort. I immediately despatched Lieutenant Williamson to inform the general that the enemy had retired from the city, and to receive his orders. General Washburn soon made his appearance, and assumed general direction of affairs. Soon after, by his direction, I proceeded to the front on the Hernando road, but before I reached the scene of action fighting had ceased, the enemy having retired pursued by the cavalry. Various rumors were afloat as to the strength of the enemy, but it was ascertained beyond doubt that General Forrest was in command. Dispositions were therefore made to meet an attack from any direction. Colonel David Moore, of the Twenty--first Missouri Infantry, volunteered his services, and I gave him command, temporarily, of all the forces on and near the Hernando road. Captain Tuther had rendered important service in rallying the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh Illinois, which had been thrown into confusion and scattered by the enemy charging through their camp. Colonel Hoge, commanding First Brigade, though most of his troops were absent on detached service, had reached the Hernando road with Company G, Second Missouri Artillery, in position. This battery, and also the section of Seventh Wisconsin Battery, which the enemy ran over but did not capture, did excellent service. Colonel Buttrick, commanding Fourth Brigade, had also arrived at the Hernando road. Also the Fortieth Wisconsin, Colonel Ray. The principal part of the fighting was done by the troops under Colonel Bell, of the Eighth Iowa, composed of a part of his own regiment and a detachment of the One Hundred and Thirteenth Illinois.

Being satisfied that no further attack would be made in that direction, I returned to the city to look after other troops. I found the militia out in strong force, in good spirits, and ready to assist in defense of the city under the command of their deservedly popular general, Charles W. Dustan. The alacrity with which the militia of Memphis turned out on this occasion abundantly proves the propriety and wisdom of the organization. Officers and men of the command, with very few exceptions, exhibited great coolness and bravery. The Eighth Iowa, which was on provost duty scattered through the city, fought bravely wherever the enemy appeared. The track of the raiders was marked wherever they went with their dead horses and men. An attack was made on the Irving Block Prison, but the guards bravely stood their ground, and soon drove the enemy away. Many officers temporarily in the city and others on detached service, promptly volunteered their services. The clerks and orderlies about my headquarters, and many citizens not liable to militia duty, and unarmed soldiers, repaired to the armory of the militia, procured arms, and joined the ranks. By 9 A. M. it was ascertained that Forrest was in full retreat, principally on the Hernando road. He failed entirely in the object of his expedition. He undoubtedly expected to capture General Washburn, General Hurlbut, who was temporarily in the city, and myself, and thereby create such confusion as to enable him to march into the city with his main force. His plan was well laid and the moment propitious; the morning was exceedingly foggy, and the state of the atmosphere such that the report of small arms and even artillery was heard but a short distance. Although later in the morning six pieces of artillery on the Hernando road fired about thirty rounds each, the report was not heard at General Washburn's or my

headquarters. The parties sent into the city were led by officers and others well acquainted with the city. They rode through the picket-line and camps, capturing and killing what they could as they went, but making no halt until they reached these points in the city. They passed through the Seventh Wisconsin Battery camp, killing one officer and several men and capturing some, but without disturbing the guns or ammunition, and these same guns were afterward turned upon them. The principal depredations were committed at General Washburn's headquarters and the Gayoso House, where they expected to find General Hurlbut, and at the Eclipse stable on Main Street, where they took quite a number of horses. . . . My thanks are due to the officers of my staff, to General Dustan, commanding the militia, to Colonel Moore, Twenty-first Missouri, who volunteered his services, and to the officers and men of my command generally for their prompt and efficient services."*

The success of Forrest's strategic movement had depended not only upon himself and the fifteen hundred men he led to Memphis, but upon the activity of Chalmers, who, with less than two thousand effectives, kept up such a strong line of pickets and continuous maneuvering as if to take the aggressive, that the absense of his chief was not suspected until he was well on his way back from Memphis.

Chalmers had made spirited attacks on the enemy's outposts on the 19th, and being reenforced by Buford, again advanced four miles in front of Oxford on the 20th, and had a sharp fight, only to be forced back. On the 21st he renewed skirmishing, but being flanked by a strong body of Federal cavalry was compelled to retreat by two small bridges across the Yocona south

* Rebellion Records, vol. xxxix, part i, pp. 472–475.

of Oxford. On the 22d the town was occupied by a large Federal force of infantry and cavalry, and in the afternoon the court-house, other public buildings, halls, and many private residences, including the elegant mansion owned by Hon. Jacob Thompson, and then occupied by his wife, were burned. After that the Federal commander began to retreat toward Holly Springs, and reached that place at ten o'clock the next day. Chalmers followed with two columns and Walton's battery, and attacked the rear-guard at Abbeville on the 23d, but suffered severely and was obliged to fall back behind Hurricane Creek. The troops and horses were jaded from twenty days' hard service, the ammunition was damp and running short, and there was dissatisfaction among his men. General Forrest ordered Chalmers to return to the south of Yocona, leaving scouts to watch the enemy, and three regiments on an outpost some miles south of Oxford at the point reached by trains on the Mississippi Central Railroad.

General Washburn on the 24th of August reported to General Canby as to the movement on Memphis: "They were driven out of the city, taking about twenty-five horses and the horses belonging to one section of the battery. We had about thirty killed and eighty wounded. Smith was instructed to send fifteen hundred cavalry at once to Panola and hold the crossing, and come around in Forrest's rear. . . . Smith has four or five thousand cavalry with him, and in the exhausted condition of Forrest's men and horses, it would seem that if our cavalry does its duty they should not get away." Forrest, however, had taken the precaution to have the telegraph-wires cut between Collierville and Germantown, and repairs were not made until noon the next day. Then the despatch to Smith was sent south from La Grange with an escort

of one hundred men, and reached him in the forenoon of the 22d. For some reason General Smith advanced only to Oxford, and made no attempt to intercept Forrest. In another despatch Washburn said: "The enemy has retired on the Hernando road. He has five hundred prisoners, but failed to take the battery." Adding the number of prisoners taken to the killed and wounded the Federal loss in the Memphis affair seems to have been about six hundred and fourteen. Some of the prisoners, however, were non-combatants.

General Maury telegraphed to Forrest: "You have again saved Mississippi. Come and help Mobile. Fort Morgan was captured by the enemy yesterday. . . . We are very weak." This bold dash into Memphis stopped the Federal advance into the heart of Mississippi, for the time being, and materially changed the plans of leaders on both sides. Memphis did not recover from the excitement for many days, and greater precautions than ever were taken to guard against surprise. The place, however, was never again so disturbed, or counted as a storm-center of the war.

CHAPTER XVII.

FORREST'S COMMAND REORGANIZES.—SUDDEN AND SUCCESSFUL MOVE THROUGH NORTH ALABAMA INTO MIDDLE TENNESSEE.—JOHNSONVILLE.

FORREST'S cavalry was speedily reorganized and every possible preparation made for active service. Chalmers's division was composed of McCulloch's and Rucker's, formerly Neely's, brigades, both of these officers having recovered from their wounds sufficiently to take the field. Buford's division was constituted of Lyon's and Bell's brigades; Chalmers was quartered at Water Valley, on the Mississippi Central, eighteen miles south of Oxford, and Buford at and near Oxford. One regiment, the Fifth Mississippi of McCulloch's brigade, Chalmers's division, was sent to Mobile on the 3d of September, and was detached for six months. On the 4th of September Forrest left Grenada under orders with his staff and escort by way of Jackson, and thence to Meridian, expecting to take part in the defense of Mobile.

Before leaving Grenada General Forrest had, on the 30th of August, 1864, issued General Order No. 73. organizing "Rucker's brigade," to be composed of the Seventh Regiment, Twenty-sixth Battalion—or Forrest's old regiment, also known as McDonald's battalion—and the Twelfth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth regiments, all being Tennessee troops. Colonel E. W. Rucker was assigned permanently to command the brigade, and this raised a storm of indignation

among the field-officers, several of whom refused to recognize the order, or orders from Colonel Rucker. Not that this officer's courage or ability was questioned, but because he was not the senior officer of the brigade, Colonel Neely holding that rank. Several of them appealed to General Chalmers, commanding the division, and he warned them in a letter dated at West Point, September 12th, that they were guilty of insubordination, and would get into serious trouble. But they held out stubbornly until Forrest's iron will came into play. He made a speech to the brigade that night, in which he clearly and defiantly asserted his authority and determination to be obeyed.

The next day he had the following officers arrested and sent to Mobile under charges for trial by court martial: Colonel W. L. Duckworth, Seventh Tennessee; Colonel J. J. Neely, Fourteenth Tennessee; Colonel F. M. Stewart, Fifteenth Tennessee; Colonel J. U. Green, Twelfth Tennessee, and Major Philip T. Allin, of McDonald's battalion, or Forrest's old regiment. These were good officers, but Forrest had a preference and would tolerate no captious disobedience of his orders. None of them returned to their commands until they reported at Gainesville, Ala., in May the following year to be paroled. Lieutenant-Colonel W. F. Taylor assumed command of the Seventh Tennessee, and so continued, except when disabled by wounds, until the surrender, and Lieutenant-Colonel D. C. Kelley continued in command of Forrest's old regiment. Forrest's action in this matter was fully sustained in orders issued from the War Department at Richmond.

Reaching Meridian on the 5th, he met General Richard Taylor, a brother-in-law of Jefferson Davis, who had just succeeded General Maury in command of the department. It was their first meeting. Forrest

was informed that he would not be needed just then at Mobile, but must go to the relief of Hood's army and move his cavalry north of the Tennessee River to worry Sherman's rear. He asked many questions as to supplies, resources, details, line of retreat, etc., as though in doubt in regard to the undertaking, and then suddenly asked for an engine to carry him twenty miles back up the railroad to meet his troops. After that he threw himself entirely into his work. Buford's division was ordered to Verona, where Forrest made his headquarters for about two weeks. Chalmers was ordered to take command at Grenada of all troops not to accompany the expedition. Bell's, Lyon's, and Rucker's brigades were concentrated at Verona. Negroes were impressed, and under guard of dismounted men used to rapidly repair the Mobile and Ohio Railroad to Corinth. General Roddey was instructed through a courier to repair the Memphis and Charleston Railroad from Corinth to Cherokee Station, near the State line of Mississippi and Alabama. Everything being in readiness, Forrest moved from Verona on the 16th of September with three thousand five hundred and forty-two effectives, and, after repairing numerous bridges and trestles on the railroad, reached Corinth on the evening of the 17th. There his trains were transferred to the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, and the advance was resumed the next morning. His men cut wood for the locomotive and filled the boilers with water brought in buckets. Such were the exigencies and resources of this suddenly improvised movement.

On the evening of the 19th these four trains reached Cherokee Station, where Roddey's command was found in good condition. Some troops, with the horses of Morton's and Walton's batteries, with Forrest's staff and part of his escort, marched across the country

from Verona, and reached the station on the same day. The whole command remained a day at this point to cook rations and to have their horses shod. Forrest's command, including a battalion of dismounted men and exclusive of Roddey's force, numbered three thousand rank and file. On the morning of the 21st the advance was moved to Colberts Ferry, on the Tennessee River, seven miles northeast of Cherokee. The river at this point was two thousand yards wide in a direct line, but the ford was tortuous through ledges and fissures in the rugged rocks, and was accomplished with much danger and difficulty. The column formed by twos and led by competent guides was safely crossed in a few hours without a casualty, and camped that night within two miles of Florence. Roddey's command, fifteen hundred strong, crossed at Bainbridge and joined Forrest on the 22d. The general, however, was sick, and remained at Tuscumbia, leaving the command of his brigade to Colonel William A. Johnson.

The whole force, not forty-five hundred strong, moved forward rapidly and reached the suburbs of Athens, Ala., on the Nashville and Decatur Railroad, at sunset on the 23d of September. This was a strongly fortified and important point. The appearance of Forrest was such a surprise that the cavalry in front was forced to seek safety in a fort three-quarters of a mile south of the town, leaving about one hundred horses and equipments in the hands of the Confederates. The encampments were occupied, and three sides of the fort invested, and the artillery was placed in advantageous positions commanding the redoubt. That night Forrest so placed his different commands as to make a strong display of force. Early next morning his artillery opened fire at a distance of eight hundred yards, and skirmishers advanced to within one hun-

dred and fifty yards of the Federal trenches, and the dismounted cavalry was moved up as if ready for a general assault. At 10 A. M. on the 24th, Major Strange and Captain Porter were sent forward under a flag of truce with the following note:

HEADQUARTERS FORREST'S CAVALRY, IN THE FIELD,
September 24, 1864.

Officer Commanding United States Forces, Athens, Ala.:

I demand an immediate and unconditional surrender of the entire force and all Government stores and property at this post. I have a sufficient force to storm and take your works, and if I am forced to do so the responsibility of the consequences must rest with you. Should you, however, accept the terms, all white soldiers shall be treated as prisoners of war and the negroes returned to their masters. A reply is requested immediately.

Respectfully,

N. B. FORREST, *Major-General.*

This demand was promptly refused. General Forrest then requested an interview with the Federal commander at any point he might designate outside of the fort. Colonel Wallace Campbell, of the One Hundred and Tenth Colored Infantry, was in command, and granted the interview, taking with him Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Dewey. Forrest told him that he was determined to take the place; that he had ample force, and demanded the surrender as a matter of humanity, and offered Colonel Campbell the privilege of inspecting his forces. After consulting his officers, the colonel and Captain B. M. Callender, of his staff, rode around the lines with Forrest, and was convinced that the fort was invested by fully eight thousand men of all arms, and as expected reenforcements from Decatur had not arrived, he decided to surrender. The Confederate force had been manipulated both as cavalry

and infantry, and made to appear about double its real strength. The garrison, fourteen hundred strong, stacked arms and was marched out at 11 A. M. The officers were allowed to retain all personal property, including horses, saddles, and side-arms, and were to be paroled as soon as Forrest could communicate with Washburn. The place might have been taken by storm, but not without heavy loss of life.

Meantime the reenforcements under Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott, One Hundred and Second Ohio, four hundred strong, from Decatur, had reached a point about a mile and a half south of the fort, and made a desperate effort to cut their way through the lines commanded by Colonel Jesse Forrest and Lieutenant-Colonels Logwood and D. C. Kelley, and several men were killed and wounded. Colonel Forrest was one of the severely wounded. While the fight was still raging, reenforcements from Forrest's main command arrived, and the Federals surrendered when surrounded in the open field after a most gallant fight in which Colonel Elliott was mortally wounded. There were still two blockhouses in sight to be reduced. One garrison consisted of eighty-five officers and men, and was surrendered without resistance. The other was only half a mile away, and the officer in charge determined that he would die before he would capitulate. Morton brought up four of his 3-inch rifled guns and opened fire at a distance of three hundred yards. The shells cleft through the heavy timbers at the first volley and exploded within, killing six men and wounding three. The heroic commander, realizing his mistake, rushed out with a white flag and tendered his surrender to General Forrest in person. The garrison numbered only thirty-five officers and men.

The aggregate of prisoners taken in and around Athens that day was thus about nineteen hundred.

The spoils were rich and abundant, and filled twenty captured wagons besides four or five ambulances. The staff-officers made careful selection of rations, medical stores and instruments, and ammunition. Four pieces of artillery, including two 12-pound howitzers, were captured, and five hundred horses and two locomotives attached to trains loaded with Government stores. Everything that could be utilized at once was distributed among the soldiers in gray, and the four hundred dismounted men under Colonel Barrett were supplied with horses and equipments. Stores that could not be removed or turned to some account were burned, together with the blockhouses, buildings used for military purposes, depots, bridges, and trestles. The Federals lost about forty killed and one hundred wounded. The Confederate losses were reported as five killed and twenty-five wounded. The prisoners and artillery captured and a long, well-loaded wagon-train were started toward Florence at five o'clock that afternoon under a strong escort commanded by Colonel Nixon. At the same hour Forrest moved northward with his main command, making eight miles by dusk. On the way two other blockhouses with seventy officers and men were captured without the firing of a gun, and the bridges as well as houses they guarded were burned. Dr. J. P. Alban, assistant surgeon of the One Hundred and Second Ohio, was left by General Forrest in charge of the wounded at Athens.

On the morning of the 25th the command was advanced three miles from the bivouac to Sulphur Springs trestle. This was a costly and important link in the railroad line connecting Nashville and Decatur. It spanned a ravine seventy feet deep and four hundred feet wide from hill to hill. There was a strong blockhouse at each end and a fort on an eminence near by. garrisoned by about four hundred white troops—the

Third Tennessee Federal Cavalry—and six hundred colored infantry. Forrest placed his best long-range guns on an elevation and opened fire at once on the Federal defense, and the lines were advanced on all sides. Then a demand was made for surrender, which, after an hour's delay, was positively refused. Firing was resumed with terrible effect from four different points. The Federals responded briskly with two 12-pound howitzers, but these were soon silenced, and the Confederate shells continued to explode in the midst of a now demoralized and almost unresisting garrison, but no offer was made to surrender.

Forrest again ordered the firing to cease, and sent Major Strange forward with a demand for capitulation, which was conceded at once. Colonel Lathrop, in command, was killed early in the fight, and was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Minnis, of the Tennessee Cavalry. The Federals lost about two hundred officers and men, all found in very narrow areas. The prisoners—some eight hundred and twenty in number, officers and men—were turned over to Lieutenant-Colonel Logwood and sent south. At the same time Forrest sent back to Florence, and across the Tennessee River, four pieces of his own artillery and the captured guns and wagon-train. Eight hundred rounds of artillery ammunition had been fired at the Sulphur Springs trestle defenses alone, which left a short supply. The great trestle was cut down and burned on the 26th.

General Buford was ordered to follow the line of the railroad northward to Elk River, and destroyed a blockhouse on the way as well as the bridge at Elk River and the long trestle by which it was approached, and a large quantity of cord-wood. Moving on to Richland Creek a few miles, Buford captured another blockhouse with about fifty men. On the 27th Forrest was moving toward Pulaski with about thirty-three

hundred men, now all well mounted, and soon encountered a heavy force supposed to be six thousand strong. A heavy skirmish ensued, the escort, sixty strong, leading as usual. A position was gained, but at the loss of seven or eight in killed and wounded. Colonel Johnson was dangerously wounded, and Lieutenant John Moore, of the Fourth Alabama, was killed. The Federals fell back, fighting stubbornly for some miles, and made a determined stand within three miles of Pulaski, and after further resistance, during which Forrest turned a dangerous flank movement with his artillery, the Union troops fell back into the town and behind the breastworks.

A demonstration was kept up all the afternoon in front, and after dark the Confederates built long lines of camp-fires, and Colonel Wheeler, with three hundred men, was ordered around to the north of the town to destroy the railroad and telegraph-lines between Pulaski and Columbia, and incidentally burned a large supply of wood intended for the use of locomotives. Forrest's loss that day was about one hundred, and he found that he could advance no farther against General Rousseau's strong force. That night, leaving pickets and rear-guard to watch the enemy, he fell back eight miles and bivouacked until morning. On the 28th, after a march of nearly forty miles in the rain, he reached Fayetteville and at once sent two detachments eastward to cut telegraph-wires and tear up tracks on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad at points north and south of Tullahoma. The next day he advanced to within fifteen miles of Tullahoma and there learned from scouts that large forces, including those recently left entrenched at Pulaski, were advancing to meet him. His men were growing weary and their horses were footsore and fatigued. A prompt change of plans was necessary. General Buford was

detached with fifteen hundred men with orders to move upon Huntsville, seize that place, if possible, destroy the railroad to Decatur, and cross the Tennessee River at or near that point. Buford's command consisted of a portion of his division and Kelley's and Johnson's brigades.

General Forrest, placing himself at the head of his remaining fifteen hundred men, including Lyon's and Bell's brigades, the Seventh Tennessee, and his own old regiment, moved westward to the right of Shelbyville, reached Lewisburg by a circuitous route at twelve o'clock on the 30th of September, and encamped on the north bank of Duck River that night. The next day he reached Spring Hill, captured some Government horses and wagons, and for a time had possession of the telegraph-office, through which he received important information in regard to the movement of troops sent to cut off his retreat; and from one despatch he learned that General Steedman was marching with a heavy column on Huntsville. Gathering all the news he could from intercepted despatches, he sent a few of a misleading character in the name of a Federal officer to General Rousseau in regard to Confederate movements, and at 2 P. M. set out in the direction of Columbia. Twelve miles from that place he captured four blockhouses and one hundred and twenty men. These houses, a Government sawmill, and three railroad bridges were burned. The commander of another blockhouse overlooking a ridge refused to surrender, and as Forrest had no artillery with him, all he could do was to call for volunteers to burn the bridge. This was accomplished without the loss of a man.

Columbia being well garrisoned, was passed around on the 2d of October, the command skirmishing sharply and meantime burning more trestles and bridges, and collecting cattle and commissary supplies. The aim

now was to effect a junction with Buford, who had not been able to capture Huntsville, but was crossing his artillery, cattle, and trains at different points. Reaching Florence on the 5th, Forrest found it necessary to hasten on to Colberts Ferry, where he found only three small ferry-boats and some skiffs to use in crossing a now greatly swollen river. The weaker men and horses, the ammunition, guns, and saddles were given the preference, but the process was painfully slow. On the 6th it was learned that the Federals had arrived in two columns at Athens, and a force was sent back to engage them. Lieutenant-Colonel F. M. Windes, with the Fourth Alabama, two hundred strong, made a flank movement on the Lawrenceburg road and greatly retarded the Federals in reaching Florence the morning of the 8th. The Second, Seventh, and Sixteenth Tennessee regiments repulsed their advance at the crossing of Cypress Creek, west of Florence, and General Steedman found it necessary to detach a brigade of cavalry and send it around by a crossing three miles above.

After that the Confederates taken in reverse retired from point to point on the Newport Ferry road. About twelve thousand Federals were now within a few miles of the ferries by which Forrest's men were escaping, and over one thousand Confederates were yet on the north bank of the river, besides Windes's men and the Sixteenth Tennessee and a detachment from the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry. A few miles below Colberts Ferry was an island covered with cane and a forest-growth, and the northern bank was not more than two hundred yards from the main shore, which had a perpendicular height above the water of about twenty feet. Forrest had Windes keep up the skirmishing while he caused the ferry-boats to drop down the river to the head of this island. There the saddles and other

equipments were stripped from the horses, tumbled into the boats, and ferried across. The horses were pushed over the steep banks and dropped into the river, and then caught by men in skiffs and made to swim across to the island. This was all done in an incredibly short space of time, but none too soon. Forrest in person looked after the last troopers crossing. The skirmishing forces were directed to scatter and cross where they could. The Federals soon appeared on the banks north of the densely wooded island, but made no attempt to follow the Confederates, who remained concealed there until they could cross the wider channel southward.

It was cold weather, but no fires were permitted to be lighted. By sunset on the 9th the entire command was safely on the south side of the river, except Windes's and Wilson's commands, which effected a passage at Newport on the 13th and brought off fifty prisoners. In this last and most masterly retreat Forrest conducted in person the crossing of twenty-five hundred men and their horses to the south bank of the Tennessee River, about one hundred head of cattle and eight pieces of artillery, and crossed himself several times from one side to the other. His losses were two men and twenty horses drowned. Had he remained in Middle Tennessee only a few days longer his military career would have been at an end. Troops had been ordered to be concentrated on him from several directions, even from Georgia. Generals Thomas, Rousseau, A. J. Smith, Washburn, Granger, Webster, Croxton, Steedman, and others were notified of his movements, and but for his presence of mind and audacity he would not have escaped. Thirty thousand troops could have been brought into the field against this little improvised expedition of less than five thousand men.

The main command was concentrated again at Cherokee Station on the 6th of October after an absence of only fifteen days. General Forrest lost during this raid forty-seven men killed and two hundred and ninety-three wounded; total, three hundred and forty. In his official report he stated that he captured eighty-six commissioned officers, sixty-seven Government employees, one thousand two hundred and seventy-four non-commissioned officers and privates, nine hundred and thirty-three negroes, besides killing and wounding about one thousand more, an aggregate of three thousand three hundred and sixty, and besides this, captured eight hundred horses and eight pieces of artillery, two thousand stands of small arms, several hundred saddles, fifty wagons and ambulances, and a large amount of medical, commissary, and Government stores, as well as destroying the railroad, with the exception of Duck River bridge, from Decatur to Spring Hill. Acknowledgments were made to members of his personal staff: Major J. P. Strange, assistant adjutant-general; Major C. W. Anderson, acting assistant adjutant-general; Colonel R. W. Pitman, assistant inspector-general; Major G. V. Rambaut, commissary, and Captain M. C. Gallaway, aide-de-camp; and thanks expressed to Captain Thomas Robins and Lieutenant J. N. Davis, who were attached to the staff during the expedition.

Meantime General Chalmers had not been idle, for at an opportune time, while his chief was in Middle Tennessee, he made a demonstration from the south on Memphis with about one thousand men, spreading the report that this was but the advance of a large force intended for the capture of the place. This was merely a diversion, but it had the effect of delaying the departure of troops ready to go up the river and around by way of Johnsonville to Nashville.

Learning that a flotilla was coming up the river with reenforcements intended for General Rousseau, Forrest ordered Lieutenant-Colonel D. C. Kelley, with about five hundred men and a section of artillery from Hudson's battery under command of Lieutenant Walton, to take a position near Eastport, Miss., to intercept the movement. The guns were all masked and the troops deployed at commanding points. On the 10th the expedition, with two gunboats and three transports, came in sight. Colonel George B. Hoge was in command. His force consisted of the One Hundred and Thirteenth and One Hundred and Seventeenth Illinois, the Sixty-first Colored Infantry, and Company G, Second Missouri Light Artillery. This was a part of the three thousand troops which had left Cairo for Florence on the first of the month. Colonel Hoge's orders were to land at Eastport, march a force across to Iuka, destroy railroad tracks and bridges, and hold Eastport until he could hear from General Washburn. Upon touching at the landing Colonel Hoge's troops were disembarked and formed in line of battle, with a battery of four guns.

While some of the men were still on the gangplanks Lieutenant-Colonel Kelley caused Lieutenant Walton to open fire from his rifled guns both upon the troops ashore and the five vessels in the river. Every shot took effect. The gunboats Undine and Key West were quickly disabled and obliged to drop down the stream. Colonel Hoge went aboard the transport City of Pekin, which also floated away. A shell struck and exploded a caisson on the transport Kernon, setting fire to the boat, and about the same time a similar disaster happened to the Aurora. The boats backed out, leaving two-thirds of the troops on the shore. These were ordered to proceed down the

river under the bluffs, and a large number were taken on board at a safe point. But four guns of the battery were lost. Colonel Hoge reached Johnsonville the same day and reported eighteen killed, thirty-one wounded, and twenty-five missing; total, seventy-four.

General Forrest, now well-nigh worn out, applied on the 8th of October for leave of absence for twenty or thirty days, as he needed rest and desired an opportunity to look after his large and neglected private interests. He also requested that his two divisions be placed, as they originally were, under the command of Brigadier-Generals Chalmers and Buford, and that Mabry's brigade be substituted for McCulloch's, which was still at Mobile and much dissatisfied. The request was not granted by General Taylor, but he wrote a most complimentary letter expressing regret that it could not be done. Johnsonville had now become a great depot for supplies sent up the Tennessee River to that point and forwarded thence by rail to Nashville and Atlanta. Forrest was ordered to look after the depot, and first of all to repair the Memphis and Charleston Railroad from Cherokee to Corinth, and the Mobile and Ohio from that point northward to Henderson or Bethel Station for the transportation of troops and artillery. Chalmers, who was below Memphis, near Grenada, was to join Forrest at Jackson by the 16th of October, but he had less than seven hundred and fifty men fit for duty and only a section of artillery. Forrest urged, in writing his superior, that the Mobile and Ohio Railroad should be protected both for the transportation of supplies and troops to his front and to Hood's army moving on Middle Tennessee, and to afford an avenue of retreat if necessary.

Buford's division, accompanied by Morton's and Walton's batteries, moved in the direction of Jacks Creek on the 17th of October. Forrest followed the

next day with his escort and Rucker's brigade, still commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Kelley, by way of Purdy and Henderson Stations, and effected a junction with Chalmers at Jackson on the 20th. Colonel Rucker reported for duty, and resumed command of his brigade, and was again under Chalmers as his division commander. Buford was despatched on the 20th to Lexington, twenty-five miles eastward of Jackson, to watch the movements of the enemy reported to be preparing to cross the river at Clinton, and on the 20th Forrest ordered him to advance northward to Huntingdon and thence by way of Paris to the mouth of Big Sandy River, and Chalmers up to McLemoresville. The men of Bell's brigade were given until the 26th to visit their homes and to secure outfits in clothing and mounts. Special attention was to be given to the collection of forage and subsistence, which were scarcer than ever before, and to the return of absentees. No resistance was to be made if the Federals attempted to cross over into West Tennessee, as such a move would be a diversion in favor of Hood. General Roddey was requested to send as many of his command as could be spared from north Alabama to the neighborhood of Corinth. Lieutenant-General Taylor was also urged to send troops temporarily to Corinth.

Buford, heading the extreme advance, divided his forces between Paris landing and at a point opposite old Fort Heiman, five miles lower down and almost opposite Fort Henry. Two 20-pounder Parrott guns, brought up from Mobile, were placed opposite Fort Heiman; one section of Morton's battery of 3-inch guns was stationed with Bell's brigade near Paris landing and commanded the river for about one mile each way. These batteries were well masked and supported by troops. Forrest's entire force north of Corinth did

not exceed thirty-four hundred men, and more than one thousand of these would not have been available or effective in action. The men and horses were depleted in numbers and run down by hard service and privation. Meantime Kirzon's scouts had been thrown out to report any movements possibly coming from the direction of Memphis; while the Sixteenth Tennessee, under Colonel Wilson, Newsom's regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wisdom, and the Fourteenth Tennessee, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Raleigh R. White, were guarding points on the river southward of Clifton where the Federals had been expected to cross.

Everything was ready for sharp work by daylight of the 29th, and at nine o'clock the Federal transport Mazeppa, with two barges in tow, came in sight down the river, and soon passed the lower batteries little dreaming of danger. A few moments later the guns opened fire with unerring precision, and shells went straight through the unarmed transport. The pilot headed for the northern shore, where the crew and officers, except the captain, escaped to the woods. A daring Confederate volunteered to paddle across on a log, and accepted the surrender of the gallant captain and his disabled steamer. The yawl was launched and rowed to the opposite shore by the two heroes of the occasion. A detail was made for the return trip, and by means of a hawser the Mazeppa was soon pulled across and tied up on the western bank. This proved to be a rich prize, abounding with clothing and blankets, shoes, sutler's stores, wines, liquors, and many others of the necessities and luxuries of life to which the thinly clad and ill-fed Confederates were quite unused. The cargo was placed under a strong guard and quickly removed some distance to the rear. While this was going on and nearly completed, about 5 P. M.,

three gunboats appeared from below and began to shell the men who were actively engaged in removing the stores. These, however, were soon repulsed by the shore batteries, but General Buford, expecting a return of the gunboats in greater force, had the Mazeppa burned.

On the morning of the 30th the steamer Anna came down the river and succeeded in running the gantlet of all the batteries. This was attributable in part to the forbearance of General Buford, who was said to have withheld the fire of his heavy guns in the hope of capturing the vessel. The pilot agreed to round-to, but when firing ceased he suddenly resumed his course and made his escape under a heavy fire. The boat was considerably riddled and damaged. Next from above appeared the gunboat Undine, convoying the transport Venus with two barges, the Undine being the boat of recent unfortunate experience at Eastport. These boats were not fired upon until they had passed the upper batteries. The lower and larger guns opened with such effect that they were turned back and held between two fires. Colonel Rucker moved up with two 10-pounder Parrotts to a point on the bank whence he could reach the boats. Just then the J. W. Cheeseman from above appeared on the scene, and was attacked by the upper and middle batteries, supported by the Fifteenth Tennessee regiment and the Twenty-sixth Battalion Tennessee Cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Kelley. The Undine was disabled and driven to the northern bank, where nearly all the officers and crew escaped. The transport Venus was well defended by a small detachment of Union infantry, but surrendered to Lieutenant-Colonel Kelley, who went aboard with two companies of his battalion, crossed the river, and brought the gunboat Undine back to the Confederate side.

Another gunboat, No. 29, came down the river and opened fire for a time and then withdrew. The Cheeseman was found to be badly damaged, and by order of General Forrest was burned. The Undine, a large boat carrying eight 20-pounder brass howitzers, and the Venus were not greatly damaged, and were soon repaired and became the nucleus of a Confederate flotilla which was to have a brief but brilliant career without parallel in all naval history. Forrest had a fancy for artillery, and now this most resourceful man was to organize a small navy manned by mounted infantry. The Undine became the new commodore's flag-ship; the two 20-pounder Parrotts from Mobile were placed on the gunboat Undine under command of Captain Gracey, who fought with Forrest at Chickamauga, and all the sailors and seamen were known for the time being as the horse marines. Lieutenant-Colonel W. A. Dawson, however, was placed in immediate command of the Venus, which was to be well supported from the shore in moving on Johnsonville. A trial trip of these two vessels was made, and as their noses were not run into the banks it was regarded as satisfactory. The novel sight of Confederate flags flying at the mastheads of Federal craft created much enthusiasm among the troops on shore. Upon the return, supplies of shoes, blankets, hard bread, etc., taken from the Mazeppa were taken on board the Venus, as well as the two 20-pounder Parrotts. On the morning of the 1st of November the expedition was set in motion toward Johnsonville. Chalmers's division led the advance, and Buford moved in the rear to watch for gunboats from below. The Undine and Venus were expected to keep under cover of Morton's and other batteries moving southward on the west bank of the river. The roads were rough and slippery, rain was pouring down, and all the conditions as distressing as possible. Yet there

was an exhilaration of spirits among the men created by a sense of danger and the novelty of the surroundings.

On the afternoon of the 2d the little flotilla ventured incautiously ahead of land supports and suddenly came under fire of gunboats Nos. 29 and 32, led by Lieutenant-Commander King, U. S. N. The Venus, well in advance, was soon badly damaged, run ashore and captured, together with the two Parrott guns, two hundred rounds of precious ammunition, five hundred and seventy-six boxes of hard bread, and other valuable freight which had been taken from the Mazeppa by Captain Gracey. Colonel Dawson and the other officers and men all escaped to the shore without having time to fire the vessel. The guns and ammunition taken were afterward used against the Confederates at Johnsonville. The Undine escaped down the river for the time being, and was protected by Chalmers's artillery placed in position at Davidsons Ferry, while the Venus was taken off in tow. That evening the head of the column reached a point a mile below Reynoldsburg and encamped there, General Forrest and staff being four miles southward. On the 3d the Undine and land forces proceeded cautiously up the river. Some Federal gunboats appeared from below but were engaged and checked by batteries on the shore. The Key West and two other gunboats came down from Johnsonville and, while the first one was damaged by artillery fire, others from above and below closed in on the Undine and drove her to the eastern bank. Captain Gracey fired and destroyed the vessel and escaped with his men to the cane-brakes, and remaining there until night, crossed back on logs and rafts and rejoined their command. And thus ended this unique, ill-starred, and almost hopeless undertaking.

Late on the afternoon of the 3d Forrest and his

chief of artillery, Morton, made a reconnaissance of Johnsonville from the opposite shore. The place was a mere hamlet at the mouth of a creek, with railroad depot and considerable buildings at the steamboat landing. Back of this, in a field about one hundred feet above the water-front, was a strong redoubt armed with heavy ordnance and rifle-pits running down west and south. On the western side the bank was about twenty feet above the river, dropping back to a bottom. This was heavily covered with timber except when cut down to give range for the guns in the fort. Forrest decided to attack the place at two o'clock next day. During the night Thrall's battery—12-pounder howitzers—was placed under cover opposite the southern landing. General Lyon, who had been a regular artillery officer before the war, arrived with four hundred Kentucky troops, and took charge of this battery in person, causing the guns to be pushed forward three hundred yards by hand and having chambers sunk and embrasures cut through the bank. The men worked hard all night, and even after daylight, but with great caution. The batteries were well supported by Buford's and Chalmers's men concealed in the timber and behind logs and other natural protection.

The Federals evidently felt safe in the thought that Forrest was vanquished and far away, making his escape. Three gunboats with steam up were moored at the Johnsonville landing; passengers were strolling about, and ladies could be seen coming down the hill as if to bid adieu to friends; officers and men were busy on the decks; laborers were at work handling freight; soldiers, white and colored, straggled up and down the hillside between the landing and the redoubt, and a sense of the utmost security and satisfaction seemed to pervade the animated panorama. General

Forrest viewed all this through his glasses with a different sense of satisfaction. The time had come to strike a decisive blow. Two P. M. was the hour set for the attack, and the watches of commanding officers had been timed together, but the signal was not given until three o'clock. Then ten guns were fired as one, and every shell seemed to take effect. Steam poured forth from many apertures in the gunboats and the crews were seen to jump into the river and swim for the shore. Only one gunboat was able to return the fire. But the ordnance on the redoubt opened promptly and soon fired with remarkable accuracy on the sunken Confederate batteries, though with not much effect. Two boats were soon in flames and another was run ashore and deserted. As the boats floated away they set fire to nearly all the barges and transports at the landing. At four o'clock Forrest turned his attention to the buildings filled with stores and to the vast accumulations of various kinds of army supplies stacked on the ground. A few well-directed shots set on fire great piles of hay and corn and barrels of spirits.

The flames shot up madly and in a short time there was a wall of fire on the river banks, consuming everything of value, and in one hour the great depot, the main object of the expedition, was destroyed. The hungry Confederates claimed that they could smell the burning meats across the river as well as detect fumes of sugar, coffee, and liquors all going up in grand conflagration. The firing of artillery soon ceased, and the cavalry force, except Rucker's brigade, was at once ordered several miles to the rear, and after dark all the artillery was withdrawn except one section. Forrest returned in the morning and viewed the ruins. The gunboats, transports, and barges, railroad depot, warehouses, and other buildings and stores that had covered acres of ground, were all gone, and

the redoubt guarded only heaps of ashes and smoking embers. The artillery and troops under Rucker were now withdrawn, though not without firing a volley at a colored regiment which came out to make a futile demonstration. The total money value of the property destroyed and captured during the operations of Forrest on the Tennessee River, including barges and steamboats, was estimated by an assistant inspector-general of the United States Army at about two million two hundred thousand dollars. Other estimates were much greater. The military and naval forces of Johnsonville on November 4th were stated to be as follows: Forty-third Wisconsin Volunteers, seven hundred men; detachments of the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and One Hundredth United States Colored Infantry (numbers not given); quartermasters' employees, eight hundred men; six 10-pounder Parrott guns, four 12-pounder Napoleon guns, and two 20-pounder Parrott guns (captured on the Venus), and the gunboats Key West, Elphin, and Tawah.

Forrest, in his report, says: "Having completed the work designed for the expedition I moved my command six miles during the night by the light of the enemy's burning property. The roads were almost impassable and the march to Corinth was slow and toilsome, but we reached there on November 10th after an absence of over two weeks, during which time I captured and destroyed four gunboats, fourteen transports, twenty barges, twenty-six pieces of artillery, and six million seven hundred thousand dollars' worth of property, and captured one hundred and fifty prisoners. General Buford, after supplying his own command, turned over to my chief quartermaster about nine thousand pairs of shoes and one thousand blankets. My loss during the entire trip was two killed and nine wounded."

The return back to the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was attended with great difficulty. Forrest had been ordered by General Beauregard to join Hood in Middle Tennessee. His aim was to cross at Perryville, which point he reached on the evening of the 6th of November. Next day he succeeded in crossing over only four hundred of Rucker's command by means of the two yawls which had been taken from the Mazeppa. Then he ordered Rucker to proceed in the direction of Florence while he would continue southward. Such was the condition of the roads that as many as sixteen horses, or from four to eight yoke of oxen, were required to drag a single gun, and one day Morton's battery was only advanced two and a half miles. Chalmers was ordered to march to Iuka by way of the river roads, and Buford marched by way of Corinth with his division. Both were united at Cherokee Station on the 16th of November, and marched thence to Florence, where they crossed the Tennessee River on the 17th and 18th on a pontoon bridge constructed for General Hood's army, which was encamped on both sides of the river. All extra baggage and artillery, except eight pieces and the disabled horses of both divisions had been ordered to Verona, Miss. On his way to Hood's army, Forrest met General Beauregard, now in control of operations in the departments commanded by Generals Hood and Taylor, had a full conference with him at Tuscumbia, and upon arriving at Florence he was placed in command of all the cavalry of the Army of Tennessee.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COVERING HOOD'S DISASTROUS RETREAT FROM NASHVILLE.

Lieutenant-General Hood turned the Army of Tennessee from near Atlanta toward Middle Tennessee about the 1st of October, 1864. Sherman's communications were first touched at Big Shanty, north of Marietta and Kenesaw Mountain. The railroad was destroyed thence to Dalton, and the entire available force was thrown northwest to Gadsden, Ala. The plan was to cross the Tennessee River near Gunters Ferry, the southernmost point of the river, move into Middle Tennessee in Sherman's rear and force him to leave Atlanta and north Georgia, as well as to obtain subsistence for Hood's well-nigh half-starved men. Reaching Gadsden on the 21st of October, he turned the head of his command to Decatur, but halting, soon found a strong Federal force there, lost some three weeks' time, marched forty miles westward, and finally effected a crossing at Florence. It was natural that such a man as Forrest, who had often been over and fought over much of the ground, should be summoned to report to Hood. The main army, divided into three corps, consisted of effective infantry, twenty-five thousand, artillery, two thousand, and W. H. Jackson's cavalry, one thousand nine hundred and eighty-six. This division was composed of Armstrong's brigade, thirteen hundred men, and Ross's brigade, six hundred and eighty-six. To this aggregate force of

about twenty-nine thousand was added Forrest's cavalry of three thousand effectives. Buford's division was reduced to about seven hundred and fifty men and Bell's brigade to seven hundred and fifty by the absence of men furloughed to secure mounts, and all but four hundred and fifty of the Kentucky brigade were on detached service.

Upon assuming command on the 17th of November Forrest issued a brief but stirring address to his subordinates and all the troops placed under him. Preparations were rapidly made for a forward movement to Shoal Creek in advance of the infantry. Buford and Jackson were ordered northward the next day on the military road and soon came in collision with a brigade of Union cavalry of Hatch's division which seemed to be foraging in force. Huey's Kentucky battalion, one hundred and fifty men, was in advance and suffered severely in the sharp skirmish which followed. General Frank Armstrong, of Jackson's division, came to the rescue and the Federals were repulsed with the loss of several prisoners. Colonel Edward Crossland was here again severely wounded just after recovering from injuries received at Harrisburg. The weather was exceedingly inclement, but Forrest had made well-defined plans, and on the 21st of November set out with Chalmers's division toward Nashville, reaching Henryville on the 23d. Buford and Jackson, by a different road, reached Lawrenceburg on the 22d and had a brush with Hatch's division of cavalry, which retreated toward Pulaski. On the 22d Forrest, with Lieutenant-Colonel White of the Fourteenth Tennessee in advance, encountered a considerable Federal force at Fouche Springs, and ordered Rucker's brigade to skirmish sharply at the front while Lieutenant-Colonel D. C. Kelley was directed to move around on the left flank.

Forrest led his escort of eighty men far to the right and rear, and just at dark came suddenly upon a body of cavalry in the act of going into camp. Kelley was not within hearing, and Forrest, with characteristic dash, charged at the head of his escort into the encampment, firing right and left at short range. This produced a stampede and resulted in the capture of fifty prisoners, twenty horses, and one ambulance. Rucker heard the firing and charged in front, driving the Federals down upon Forrest, and he was obliged to turn off the road with his escort and prisoners to escape being swept away. As it was they ran against a small detachment of Union soldiers, which was captured.* After that Forrest ambuscaded the retreating Federals and fired upon the advancing column which, being pressed from the rear and unable to deploy in the woods, made a gallant charge down the road and escaped, but not without considerable loss in men and horses. Rucker came up very soon and was recognized by his voice in the dark, or otherwise would have been fired upon, and the Confederates proceeded to the encampment previously attacked, where an abundance of abandoned forage and subsistence was found and enjoyed for the night. Rucker's losses and those of the escort for the day were five killed and thirty wounded. Those of the enemy were much greater, exclusive of prisoners.

Rucker resumed his march on the morning of the 24th to Mount Pleasant, where he captured thirty-five thousand rounds of small-arms ammunition and the guard in charge. The enemy was pressed thence to the suburbs of Columbia, where a strong stand was made, and in a hand-to-hand fight the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Dawson, of the Fifteenth Tennessee,

* Rebellion Records, vol. xlv, part i, p. 752.

lost his life in an encounter with a color-bearer. Chalmers, in his report of the affray, says: "In the pursuit Lieutenant-Colonel Dawson was killed while leading his regiment in the charge. He had emptied his revolver and was endeavoring to wrest one of the enemy's flags from its bearer when he was killed."* General Forrest arrived in front of Columbia on the 24th, invested the place, and waited for Hood's infantry, which appeared on the 27th, when the Federals retreated. On the 28th nearly all the Confederate cavalry crossed Duck River at different fords. Meantime Brigadier-Generals Buford and Jackson had advanced from Lawrenceburg, meeting strong resistance, but driving the Federals toward Pulaski and gaining the advantage in a sharp engagement with Edward Hatch's division at Campbellsville. The forces in Pulaski had been flanked out of position and forced rapidly toward Nashville. Every day there was a battle, though classed only as a skirmish at that period of the war. The Federals did not get back to Columbia and across Duck River any too soon. Forrest's quick, sharp advance was a constant surprise, although he was met by gallant, well-trained, and self-reliant troops. Colonel Stone, of General George H. Thomas's staff, says: "In spite of every opposition Forrest succeeded in placing one of his divisions on the north side of Duck River before noon on the 28th, and forced back the Union cavalry on the roads leading toward Spring Hill and Franklin." †

Forrest advanced with Chalmers's division that night eight miles beyond Columbia on the Spring Hill and Carrs Mill road, and was greatly disappointed to learn at eleven o'clock that night that Buford had met such effective resistance in crossing Duck River that

* Rebellion Records, vol. xlv, part i, p. 763.

† Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, vol. iv, p. 444.

he could not join him before the next morning. Jackson's division crossed at Lilliards Mills, next day moved up the Lewisburg and Franklin pike, and Armstrong soon reported that he had struck a strong force. He was directed to engage it but not too vigorously. Forrest, with Buford's, Jackson's, and Chalmers's divisions then advanced toward Spring Hill, driving General Wilson, now in command, with heavy fighting toward Franklin, and turning eastward when within two miles of the place became engaged with the infantry in a strong position, and was forced back. Hood sent word to hold out, that his infantry was only two miles away. A general attack was soon made in front on the flanks by Forrest and Cleburne. The Federals were driven from their rifle-pits and back into Spring Hill. Jackson was ordered forward to Thompsons Station to cut off the retreat if possible, and he engaged the enemy with his small force at eleven o'clock on the night of the 29th; but all efforts failed and the retreat was continued with great celerity.

General Cheatham, having come up to Spring Hill, was ordered to attack the Federal column vigorously at sunset, but owing to some misunderstanding or blunder this was not done. The Federals in that neighborhood were now outnumbered by the Confederates two to one. Forrest had prepared the way for a brilliant victory which was not gained. The Union forces were allowed to escape with impunity, and Jackson's heroic fight to hold the pike was all in vain. About nine o'clock that night, the 29th, General Stewart's corps came up to the point where Forrest was in bivouac, and the two officers rode together to General Hood's headquarters, a mile distant, and on the way Forrest was surprised to find that Cleburne's division had been withdrawn from its former position, leaving the road

open for the rear divisions of the Federal army. Word came that Jackson was pressed and needed aid. Buford and Chalmers had fired sixty rounds of ammunition that day and were without a cartridge, and the ordnance train as well as others was far in the rear. As a result of the conference with General Hood, Forrest undertook to hold the pike with Jackson's division. Returning to his headquarters he found General Jackson waiting for him, and after a conference the latter went back to his post and resumed the fight, which lasted from midnight until daylight. But the most he could do was to harass the enemy, killing, wounding, and capturing a few, and causing some wagons to be abandoned. One of his brigades (Ross's) destroyed a train of cars near Thompsons Station.

The next morning, November 30th, Forrest, after disposing of his forces, moved forward with his escort and Bell's brigade upon the Franklin pike. Six miles from Spring Hill he overtook Jackson, who was close upon the Federal rear-guard. Bell's brigade was thrown forward and took part in a skirmish for four miles, and until the Federals were behind their lines at Franklin. General Forrest proceeded to make a reconnaissance of the position occupied by the Federals, and when General Hood came up at one o'clock reported that the place was very strong, but that he could flank the Federals from their works with a division of infantry and his cavalry in two hours. Hood merely told him to take charge of the cavalry to be posted on both flanks, and if the assault proved successful to complete the ruin of the enemy by capturing those who attempted to escape in the direction of Nashville. Cheatham's corps was formed on the left, Stewart's on the right, and General S. D. Lee's held in reserve, but nearly all were finally in action. The advance to Franklin had been made as rapidly as possible under

the conditions. The Federal forces in the way were generally outnumbered and somewhat scattered, and had been flanked and forced back at nearly all points, until now they were well concentrated within strong works and could not do less than make a stand. Hood thought they were still retreating, and that it would be easier to drive than to flank them out of their works. Never was greater mistake made, never such unnecessary wholesale murder of veteran soldiers even on the previous 22d of July in front of Atlanta.

By 4 P. M. all was ready for the slaughter. Forrest, under instructions, had placed Jackson's and Buford's divisions on Stewart's right on the south side of Harpeth River, while Chalmers's division, with a fragment of a brigade under Biffle, was placed on Cheatham's left on the Carters Creek pike. Buford's men were in touch with the infantry eastward of Franklin between the Lewisburg pike and the river, and as the advance was made soon after four o'clock Jackson's division was thrown across the river and came in contact with Wilson's cavalry. Forrest crossed over with Jackson, and Buford, pushing both the cavalry and infantry in his front before him, soon drove the dismounted Federal troops across the river. The battle raged on this part of the line as well as in the center until dark, when Forrest, learning that Hood had failed in the main battle, withdrew his troops to the south side of the river. Meantime Chalmers on the extreme Confederate left advanced as far as possible and was heavily engaged with an infantry force, keeping up a constant fire to hold the enemy in his front.

General James H. Wilson, one of the famous cavalry leaders of the war, gave the Confederates great credit for their intrepidity, saying that if Chalmers had been with Forrest, and "had his [Hood's] whole cavalry force advanced against me, it is possible that it

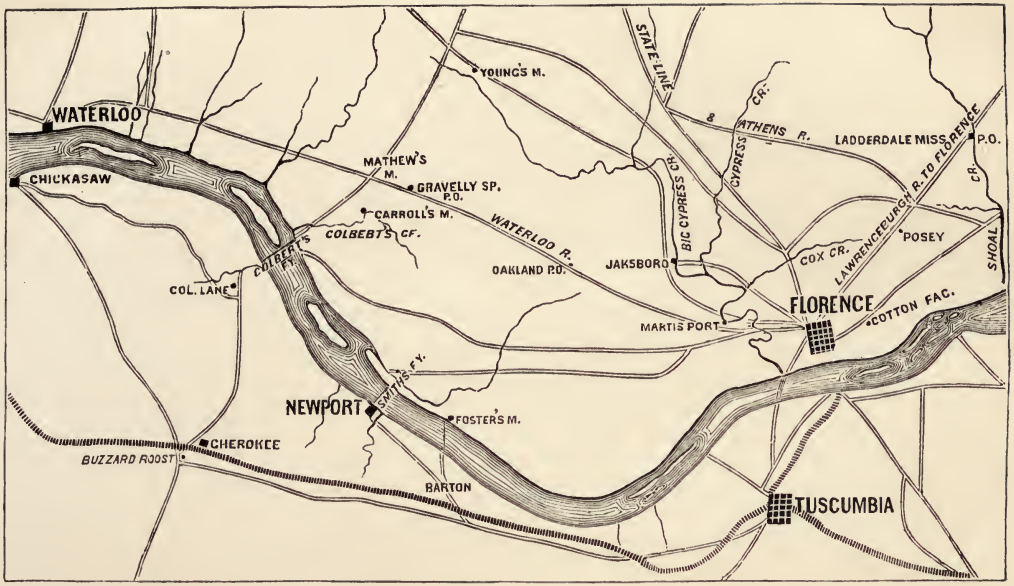
would have succeeded in driving me back." * But in fact only Jackson's division, eighteen hundred men, was engaged with Wilson across the river. This was one of the bloodiest and most desperately contested battles of the war, not excepting Gettysburg. The Confederates, with all their valor and implicit confidence in their leaders, only broke through the lines at two or three points. Their losses were frightful both from this point and the batteries on Figuers Hill which overlooked and enfiladed the field. The best and the bravest went down like grass before the scythe. It was an awful harvest of death. Here fell the great leaders as well as the privates in the ranks. The details of the battle need not be mentioned in this connection. It is sufficient to say that a force of about sixteen thousand Confederate infantry was repulsed with terrific slaughter by about thirteen thousand Federal infantry, assailed in strong entrenchments. The remaining infantry, Federal and Confederate, were not engaged. The Federal cavalry under General Wilson numbered about seventy-seven hundred. Forrest had hardly five thousand all told. That night at a seasonable hour Major-General Schofield, in command, withdrew toward Nashville, leaving the dead, the greater part of his wounded, and some stores and supplies in the hands of the Confederates.

General Hood, in his report, says: "We captured about one thousand prisoners and several stands of colors. Our loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was fifty-five hundred. Among the killed were Major-General P. R. Cleburne, Brigadier-Generals Gist, John Adams, Strahl, and Granbury. Major-General Brown, Brigadier-Generals Carter, Manigault, Quarles, Cockrell, and Scott were wounded, Carter mortally, and Brig-

* Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, vol. iv, p. 446.

adier-General George W. Gordon captured." Hood's total losses were, in fact, about sixty-four hundred, including eighteen hundred and one killed. The losses of Forrest's cavalry in this battle were light compared to those of the infantry. As soon as it was discovered that the Union forces were in retreat, Forrest's cavalry pursued vigorously on the morning of the 1st of December. Crossing the Harpeth at daylight with Buford and Jackson, and advancing to Wilson's cross-roads, the enemy was overtaken in some force, but dislodged by the opening of Morton's battery and a charge by Buford. Brisk skirmishing ensued without important results. Some colors, prisoners, and horses were taken in different light actions. Chalmers moved forward on the left without meeting with serious resistance, and when within six miles of Nashville the cavalry divisions were halted slightly in advance of the infantry and thrown into position for the night on a line from the Nolensville turnpike on the right to the Granny White turnpike on the left, a distance of four miles. Chalmers being slightly in the advance on the Franklin pike was encamped for the night not more than four miles from Nashville. On the morning of December 2d his troops, with Biffle's demi brigade on the left, moved up nearer Nashville on the Hillsborough and Harding pike, while Forrest with Buford and Jackson advanced by the Nolensville pike within three miles of the State capital, which was in full view. The infantry arrived in the afternoon, and Forrest was relieved to give his attention to blockhouses and garrisons in the neighborhood and to interfere with the navigation of the Cumberland River.

On the 3d Lieutenant-Colonel Kelley with three hundred men and two pieces of artillery captured two transports loaded with horses and other Government property twelve miles below Nashville, but while un-



Map of part of the Tennessee River in Alabama.

loading the horses the enemy's gunboats came down from Nashville and recaptured the transports. Kelley, however, secured fifty-six prisoners and one hundred and ninety-seven horses and mules. Forrest on the same day, with Buford's division, captured a stockade with eighty prisoners, besides killing and wounding several more by the first shots from Morton's guns. A train coming up the road from the direction of Murfreesboro was crippled and captured, but the negro troops on board nearly all escaped. On the 4th two more blockhouses were taken and all were burned. Altogether two hundred and fifty officers and men were captured, including those taken with the train. Under orders from General Hood Forrest proceeded with Buford's and Jackson's divisions toward Murfreesboro to picket the railroad, and northward to the Cumberland River. At La Vergne, on December 5th, General W. H. Jackson captured a redoubt with a garrison of eighty men, two pieces of artillery, together with wagons and stores, while Forrest and Buford took another blockhouse with forty officers and men. The blockhouse at Smyrna Station was also taken that day with thirty-five prisoners. Major-General Bate with his division of infantry reported to General Forrest four miles from La Vergne to cooperate in the movement against Murfreesboro. The cavalry approached within four miles of that place on the evening of the 5th, but the infantry did not reach the scene until the next morning. The Confederates, reenforced by two small brigades of infantry—Sears's and Palmer's, about sixteen hundred men—advanced upon the town and skirmished lightly for two hours; but the Union troops fell back within their works and awaited an attack. Meanwhile Forrest, taking one hundred and fifty men of Pinson's Mississippi regiment, made a close reconnaissance of the works—Fortress Rosecrans, the strongest

in the South—and became convinced that the position was too strong to be taken by assault.

General Lovell H. Rousseau was known to have at least seven thousand men in the fortress. Forrest had only sixty-five hundred all told and decided to wait until he could hear from General Hood. On the morning of the 7th Forrest, who was stationed with Palmer's infantry brigade on a hill two miles from Murfreesboro, observed the enemy move out in force on the Salem pike with infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Forrest prepared to meet this movement by forming a line of battle composed of Bate's division and Sears's and Palmer's brigades, with Jackson's cavalry on the flanks, at the Wilkinson pike. Light breastworks were hastily constructed and the Confederate commander was confident that his infantry lines would prove invincible. The Federal force, consisting of two brigades of infantry and thirteen hundred and twenty-six cavalry, with artillery, all commanded by Major-General R. H. Milroy, advanced with great gallantry, and was soon sharply engaged. After thirty minutes General Milroy fell back into a thick wood, moved by the right flank in a northeasterly direction, realined his men, and again advanced to the attack. The Confederate lines had to be readjusted to meet the movement on the Wilkinson pike. Forrest rode among the infantry, assuring them that if they would hold their own for fifteen minutes he would destroy the Federals with his cavalry from the rear.

In forming a new line of battle Forrest fell back some distance, expecting to draw the Federals away from their base and throw Jackson's and Buford's divisions in their rear. The enemy came on in handsome, confident style, drove in the Confederate skirmishers and charged upon the main line, when to the great surprise of Generals Forrest and Bate all the infantry,

except General Tom Benton Smith's brigade (Bate's old brigade), was thrown into wild and hopeless confusion. These men were veterans who had been exemplars of greatest valor upon many battle-fields, but the panic or the instinct of better judgment or self-preservation was uncontrollable. Forrest was wild with indignation and rode among the fleeing soldiers, entreating, begging, and ordering them to rally. Pursuing a panic-stricken color-bearer and ordering him to halt, without being heeded, he seized the flag and continued his efforts to try to rally the line.*

General Bate and various officers of the line and staff were likewise active in their efforts to stay the ebbing tide of demoralized Confederates. This was accomplished finally, but not until the cavalry was brought into action. Ross's brigade was thrown forward on the front and Armstrong attacked the Federals on the right flank and rear with such vigor that they yielded the field and fled back toward Murfreesboro. After the battle the Confederate infantry marched northward eight miles and rested at Stewarts Creek, and the cavalry bivouacked in their former position. The withdrawal of the Federals within their fortifications was due in part to a bold strategic movement of General Buford who, under orders of General Forrest, had swung around and attacked the place from the rear and with dismounted men advanced near to the center of the town. This hastened the return of Milroy, under orders from General Rousseau. In this bold attack Buford had two of Morton's guns with him. These penetrated as far as the court-house, and at 2 P. M., nearly all the horses being killed, the pieces were carried off by hand.

* General Forrest's bugler Gaus was by his side constantly sounding the charge, until he for the second time had his bugle riddled with balls at short range.

Bate's division of infantry was recalled to join Hardee's corps near Nashville, and a small brigade under Colonel Olmstead was assigned to take its place, thus leaving Forrest with three weak infantry brigades. Buford was detached on the 11th with his Kentuckians, now numbering about three hundred, to do picket duty at the Hermitage and on the Cumberland, so as to obstruct navigation above Nashville. The remaining infantry brigades were engaged on the 12th in destroying the railroad between Murfreesboro and La Vergne. General Jackson, operating southward with Ross's brigade in the advance, had captured a train of seventeen cars well freighted with supplies from Stephenson intended for the garrison at Murfreesboro. This was destroyed, and some two hundred members of the Sixty-first Illinois Infantry, who made a gallant defense, were captured. The remainder of the regiment escaped to a neighboring blockhouse.

On the morning of the 14th General Forrest moved eastward of Stone River with two of his infantry brigades, to look out for a Federal foraging train reported in that direction. The next day he received orders from General Hood to hold himself in readiness for an emergency, and thereupon concentrated his command at Wilkinson's crossroads, six miles distant. On the evening of the 16th Forrest received notice of the battle and disastrous defeat of Hood in front of Nashville, with orders to fall back toward Duck River and hold himself in readiness to protect the rear of the retreating army. Buford was to retire through La Vergne from the Hermitage and protect Forrest's rear until he was well under way. Forrest's sick and baggage-trains were at Triune, and he took up his line of retreat by way of Lilliards Mills on Duck River, while Armstrong was detached to Hood's rear. Forrest's in-

fantry were barefoot, and he had four hundred prisoners as well as one hundred head of cattle and four hundred hogs to retard his march. The roads were in terrible condition and progress was painfully slow. Duck River was found to be rising rapidly. The prisoners, cattle, and half the wagons were rapidly thrown across, and after that Forrest had to move westward to Columbia to secure a crossing for the remainder of his trains and artillery.

Meantime General Chalmers had been operating with the utmost alertness upon the right and left flanks of Hood's army. His headquarters were on the Harding turnpike, four miles southwest of Nashville. Biffle's command was deployed up the river, and Rucker's brigade, only twelve hundred strong, on the left, touching the river, which was successfully blockaded. On the 14th Ector's brigade of infantry was sent to the assistance of Rucker, and the lines were readjusted. The weather became intensely cold and the ground was covered with sleet and snow, but this did not for a moment interfere with the activity in the trenches around Nashville. Thousands of men were at work strengthening every possible point of defense, and even citizens were impressed or employed, and all this under the direction of skilful engineers. The army within numbered eighty-three thousand, the one without about twenty-two thousand. Major-General Thomas could have sallied out any day for two weeks and vanquished Hood's army, but he seems to have preferred to strengthen his cavalry so as to be able to cut off the retreat even across Duck River, and thus bring the war to an end in the west, which would have been at once a humane and brilliant achievement.

When the battle of Nashville began on the morning of December 15th, Wilson's cavalry force consisted of twelve thousand five hundred men with nine thousand

horses, two thousand of which he reported as scarcely fit for service. Advancing on the Federal right with a splendid force, greatly superior in numbers to all the Confederate cavalry combined, he easily brushed away Ector's brigade of infantry, which, however, made a stubborn resistance before sweeping eastward to join the main body of infantry. Moving out on the Harding pike, Wilson captured Chalmers's headquarters wagon and part of his train. Chalmers, who was with Rucker down the river, was thus cut off, and in the rear of the Federal army. Late in the evening he succeeded in effecting a junction with Hood's left. Early on the morning of the 16th Rucker took a position on Hood's left and was soon assailed by a strong cavalry column. Chalmers made every possible effort to resist this and kept up a gallant fight nearly all day. Late in the afternoon he rode toward General Hood's headquarters to seek orders, and in his absence a note was handed to Rucker from Hood, stating that the battle was lost and ordering the cavalry to cover his retreat on the Granny White turnpike, and resist the Federal pursuit at all hazards. A duplicate of this despatch was captured by General Wilson, or it somehow fell into his hands. This to him was official information that Hood had given up the battle and was on the retreat.

The Seventh Alabama, which had been cut off in the rear on the Harding pike, came up and joined Rucker late in the afternoon, and was placed by him in a position to resist the Federal advance. Kelley was on their line but was soon overwhelmed by Wilson's triumphant troopers. Rucker returned at dusk to the point where he had left his Twelfth Tennessee, and found in its place a Federal regiment commanded by Colonel George Spalding of Hatch's division. A personal combat on horseback ensued between the two

valiant colonels, both of whom were fine riders and good swordsmen. Rucker was isolated in the midst of the enemy, and turned to make his escape. A number of shots were fired at him, and both horse and rider fell heavily to the ground. Colonel Rucker was speechless for a time, though not unconscious, and was soon placed on his own horse and carried to the headquarters of General Hatch, not far away. There he rallied sufficiently to make the impression that Forrest had arrived from Murfreesboro and was taking an active part in the events of the day. Colonel Rucker was treated with the utmost kindness and courtesy that night by Generals Wilson and Hatch and Colonel Spalding, and the next evening was sent into Nashville, where the surgeons in the hospital found it necessary to amputate his wounded arm.

Chalmers, Rucker, and Kelley had thrown all the force and energy they could command in the way of the Federal advance. This, with the impression that Forrest was on the field prevented any reckless advance in the dark and the rain. The break in Hood's infantry lines occurred about four o'clock, and the pursuit by Hammond and Croxton, of Wilson's corps, was not continued more than two or three miles, owing to the stand made by the Confederate cavalry. In daylight this would have been easily swept away. As it was the infantry had time to retreat during the night and reorganize the next morning.

As soon as General Forrest heard that a battle was in progress, he ordered Buford's division toward Nashville and Franklin, and the two divisions were united at the latter place on the 17th of December. Forrest reported to General Hood in person, and was assigned to the command of the rear-guard of the Army of Tennessee, which duty he accepted with his usual promptness, and thus the great retreat was well under

way, the last one ever to be made out of the State by Confederate forces.

General Stephen D. Lee's corps had been placed as rear-guard of infantry. Chalmers's cavalry moved next, as early as 3 A. M. on the 17th, and crossed the Harpeth near Franklin, and it was here Chalmers was joined by Buford and a part of Bell's brigade, and in the absence of Forrest was placed in command of all the cavalry, receiving orders from General Lee until the latter was wounded later in the day in a reconnaissance and succeeded in command by Major-General Carter L. Stevenson. There was sharp fighting nearly all day, and when six miles south of Franklin the Confederates, with two brigades of infantry—Pettus's Alabamians and Stovall's Georgians—the cavalry under Chalmers and Buford, and Bledsoe's battery, under Major-General Clayton, halted and formed in line of battle. The Federal brigades came on in reckless style and charged in front and on flank. The lines were mingled in a desperate *mêlée*, and many hand-to-hand conflicts took place. General Chalmers killed one Federal trooper and wounded another, and it was here that General Lee, while exposing himself, was wounded. The fight lasted well into the night, officers and men on both sides vying with each other in deeds of unsurpassed courage. The Confederates were pushed back, but yielded only with the utmost stubbornness in the face of greatly superior numbers. The object in such resistance was attained in part—Hood's main army was making time and distance southward. The infantry rear-guard reached Thompsons Station and the cavalry bivouacked that night, the 17th, at Spring Hill and was there joined by Armstrong's brigade.

Cheatham relieved Lee's corps as rear-guard, and falling back on the 18th two miles southward of Spring

Hill formed a line of battle and threw up entrenchments to protect the trains in crossing Rutherford Creek, then swollen by rains. This being accomplished, Cheatham's command of only fifteen hundred infantry, with cavalry on the flanks and in the rear, withdrew across the dangerous creek and burned the bridge. The main Confederate forces were now crossing Duck River only six miles southward, and Forrest, coming upon the scene from the direction of Murfreesboro as stated before, had met General Hood and been placed in command of the rear-guard of cavalry and infantry and at once proceeded to relieve Cheatham's worn-out command. Strahl's and Maney's brigades, however, of this division, afterward formed a new brigade under Colonel Hume R. Feild, for further service in the rear-guard.

General Hood had intended to make a stand on the line of Duck River, but his defeat had been so disastrous that he found it necessary to hurry on and cross the Tennessee River if possible. The Confederates were in a deplorable condition, many of the men being barefoot and having their feet tied up in rags; they were hungry, bedraggled, sore, and disheartened, all knowing that they had been irretrievably defeated. General Thomas, in his report, stated: "We captured thirteen thousand one hundred and eighty-nine prisoners, including seven general officers and nearly one thousand other officers of all grades, and seventy-two pieces of serviceable artillery. During the same period over two thousand deserters were received, to whom the oath was administered." Wilson had fully nine thousand cavalry with supply-trains and artillery, well mounted, fed, and equipped, and flushed with victory. Forrest had about three thousand effectives and offered to attempt the protection of the rear if given four thousand infantry under command of Major-General Wal-

thall. This was promptly acceded to, and the following fragments of commands were joined with Forrest's cavalry to constitute the most famous and effective rear-guard of the war:

The brigades of General W. S. Featherstone; Colonel J. B. Palmer; Colonel C. H. Olmstead, commanding General James Argyle Smith's brigade; Strahl's brigade, under Colonel Corrick W. Heiskell of the Nineteenth Tennessee; Colonel H. R. Feild's brigade, Feild having succeeded Maney; General D. Coleman, commanding Ector's brigade; General D. H. Reynolds's brigade; General J. B. Johnson, commanding Quarles's brigade; these were to constitute the rear-guard of infantry. Three hundred of them were barefooted, and their feet were cut by the ice and snow, yet they were ready to hold their places in the ranks. General Forrest, however, sent them forward with the wagons, thus leaving a little over thirty-five hundred effective infantry, under immediate command of General Walthall. Four skeleton brigades were formed out of the above and commanded respectively by Colonel Hume R. Feild and Brigadier-Generals Palmer, Reynolds, and Featherstone. General Hood in person arranged this force at Columbia. Riding up to the officer in command of Strahl's brigade, he said: "I am organizing a reserve guard of infantry under General Walthall, and he is to report to General Forrest, who will cover the retreat of the Army of Tennessee, and I would like to know if this command would serve in that body."

"We are soldiers, general," replied that officer. Hood promptly ordered: "You will report to Colonel Feild."

A private soldier then said: "General, when are you going to give us a furlough?" The general replied: "When we cross the Tennessee River"; adding,

"The cards have been fairly played and the Yankees have beaten us in the game."

A member of the Nineteenth Tennessee chimed in: "Yes, but, general, they were d—d badly shuffled." The general did not appear to hear this criticism.*

The burning of the bridge at Rutherford Creek by the Confederates after they were across gave them time for a good start southward. The Federals did not reach the creek until the 20th, three days after the battle of Nashville, and did not cross until the 21st. Forrest meantime had impressed oxen around Columbia to move his train and guns to the Tennessee River. He burned every bridge on Duck River for many miles, and as the stream was overflowing, General Wilson had to wait fully twenty-four hours for a tardy bridge-train, which had taken the wrong road, to come up before he could begin to throw his men across. These delays enabled Forrest to move half his train back a safe distance, and have his teams returned in time to save the other half. Such was the energy and practicability of the man who was instrumental in saving what was left of the once grand and proud Army of Tennessee, now so rapidly and surely becoming a reminiscence. After the Federals effected a crossing of Duck River, above Columbia, on the night of the 21st, and the infantry began to cross on the morning of the 22d, Forrest put his forces in retreat, his infantry moving by the Pulaski road, with Jackson's and Buford's divisions in the rear. Chalmers with the remainder of his division, which he had organized as a brigade at Columbia—about five hundred strong—moved on the left flank through Bigbeeville, and the right was well guarded by scouts.

* Statement of Colonel Luke W. Finlay, of Memphis, who commanded the Fourth Tennessee Infantry of Strahl's brigade in that campaign.

As the Federals approached Columbia a furious artillery fire of shot and shell was opened on the place. Forrest, who was still in sight, sent forward a flag of truce and had an interview with General Hatch across the river, assuring him that the place was only occupied by non-combatants and the wounded of both armies. He also proposed to exchange two thousand prisoners captured during the campaign, as they were without blankets or suitable clothing for such inclement weather, to say nothing of food and ordinary comforts. An answer was received in the name of General Thomas, after a delay of two hours, refusing to exchange prisoners or to receive those Forrest had on parole with the understanding that a like number should be subsequently returned. The only result of this flag of truce was that the shelling of the undefended place was discontinued.

The enemy closed up vigorously and opened fire with artillery upon Forrest's rear three miles south of Columbia. After a running fight for three miles farther southward, the Confederates made a stand at the head of a ravine between two high hills, and held it until the morning of the 23d, and then resumed the retreat back to a favorable point south of Lynnville, and in advance of Richland Creek, where another stand was made on the 24th. Six pieces of artillery were placed in position so as to sweep the pike, and were supported by Armstrong's brigade. The crossing of the creek was held by infantry; Chalmers and Buford were in line to the left of the artillery, and Ross's brigade was on the right. A brisk artillery duel ensued. Chalmers and Buford were forced back to the creek; Jackson's division was sent to their aid, and a warm conflict ensued for several hours. The Federals seemed to suffer rather heavily, but in the midst of the engagement General Buford was severely wounded, and

his division was consolidated temporarily with that of Chalmers. After thirty-six hours' almost constant fighting, Forrest's forces being threatened by flank movements of both infantry and cavalry, fell back toward Pulaski without further event of consequence that day.

On Christmas morning Forrest, after destroying ammunition and stores that could not be removed, and also some locomotives and two trains of cars, leaving a rear-guard under Jackson, fell back to Anthonys Hill, seven miles southward of Pulaski. Jackson's division, composed of Armstrong's brigade and Ross's veterans, remained to make as stubborn resistance as possible without being overwhelmed. Anthonys Hill, forty-two miles from Bainbridge, where Hood's army was to cross the Tennessee River, was approached from the north through a narrow valley between two high ridges. Morton's battery was placed in the gap and well masked; Armstrong's and Ross's retreating brigades dismounted and fell into line in support of the artillery, and were placed in touch with Featherstone's and Palmer's brigades of infantry on their flanks. Temporary breastworks were thrown up hastily, and Chalmers's small command was thrown to the left to look out for flank movements. The stand made at Anthonys Hill was to determine the escape or destruction of Hood's army. Nature had made this a strong strategic point for defense, and Forrest utilized it to the best advantage in a great emergency. The pass was not to be a Thermopylæ from which none should escape to tell the tale, but rather a vantage-ground of resistance made to enable flying columns to escape. The Confederates were well placed and concealed in the gap and on the flanks. As an ambuscade it was the brilliant and resolute conception of a master mind in the hour of defeat and despair.

It was not long to wait until the victorious Union troops charged the little force posted as a rear-guard, and drove it into and through the ravine and over the crest of the elevated gap. As this point was approached rather cautiously, Morton's battery opened with canister at short range, and was followed by a heavy fire of musketry from the main line of infantry and dismounted men. The Federals were in a trap, and could only answer with a scattering and ineffective fire against hidden foes. It was a complete surprise, and as the Union troops fell back in confusion they were charged and followed to the mouth of the ravine. Their loss in this quick, sharp engagement was about one hundred and fifty killed and wounded, some fifty prisoners, three hundred cavalry horses and as many overcoats, and a 12-pounder Napoleon gun with horses attached. The Confederate losses were comparatively small—about fifteen killed and forty wounded. A direct assault was not again attempted, but by four o'clock heavy Federal columns had flanked the position, its advantages were exhausted, the game of war had taken a turn, and Forrest at the right moment gave an order to withdraw. This movement was accomplished late in the day, the prisoners and captured gun being moved in the retreat.

There were no good turnpikes in that part of the country then. The roads had been cut into canals of mortar and gravel by Hood's flying army. Rain, sleet, and snow had alternated to intensify the gloom and appalling conditions of the situation. The officers and men, however, as only American soldiers could, kept up a spirit of fortitude and cheerfulness, and pushing on through mire knee-deep, reached Sugar Creek, fourteen miles from Anthonys Hill, late that night. At one o'clock on the morning of the 26th, Forrest halted the command. Sugar Creek was a clear, pebbly stream,

in which the men cleansed themselves and horses of clinging mud, and after that threw up light breastworks, built fires, and made themselves as comfortable as possible until daylight, which was an unusually long rest for them. At this point, twenty-eight miles from the Tennessee River, the rear-guard overtook the last of Hood's ordnance train, which had been left there while the mules were used in pulling the pontoon-train to the river. These being returned, the ordnance-train was ready to move, and had to be protected at any risk. The road to the river was as well kneaded as any passed over previously, and here and there were wrecks of wagons, broken-down animals, and weary men still struggling to make their way back to Dixie.

Walthall's infantry division was placed in position at sunrise on the 26th, about two hundred yards southward of the Sugar Creek ford. Jackson's division was on the right, and Chalmers was thrown seven miles to the left. Feild's brigade of infantry was on the left, Reynolds on the right, and the others in reserve. A dense fog prevailed, and the entire Confederate force was effectively concealed. The Federal cavalry, now more cautious since the ambuscade at Anthonys Hill, was heard at the ford about 8.30 A. M. Several cavalry regiments were dismounted and advanced in front of mounted cavalry. Thus disposed they came within about thirty yards of the breastworks across the road, when a volley was fired upon them and they were driven back in disorder. The two infantry brigades and Ross's brigade of cavalry charged at once, drove the Federals back on their horse-holders and through the icy creek, which was waist-deep, and the pursuit was kept up for nearly two miles before it was recalled. The Confederates held their position until noon, when the infantry was put in motion for the river, and the cavalry followed at 1 P. M. This was the last fight

worthy of the name during Hood's disastrous campaign into Middle Tennessee. The results of the day, besides the killed and wounded, were the capture of about a hundred officers and men, one hundred and fifty horses, and as many overcoats, which were of great value to the shivering men. General Chalmers repulsed an attack upon his part of the line, and captured some prisoners. Walthall's infantry division bivouacked within sixteen miles of Tennessee River that night, and on the 27th was returned to the command of Lieutenant-General Stewart. An infantry corps was placed on the north bank of the river. Forrest was relieved from his arduous duties, and with his cavalry crossed on a pontoon bridge to the south side that afternoon, and was afterward given credit by General Hood for having saved his army. The remarkable endurance and unfaltering zeal of General Forrest and subordinate commanders, and the men with the carbines, excited the gratitude of the army and the admiration of the world. The last shot fired in this ill-fated campaign was directed by one of Forrest's artillerists. While a portion of the retreating army was crossing the river on the pontoon bridge, at Bainbridge, two small Federal gunboats came in sight and opened fire on the moving column, but were driven off by a section of Morton's battery.

General Wilson, in summing up some of the horrors of this campaign toward the last, says: "The weather had become worse and worse. It was freezing cold during the nights, and followed by days of rain, snow, and thaws. The country, which was poor and thinly settled at best, had been absolutely stripped of forage and provisions by the march of contending armies. The men of both forces suffered dreadfully, but the poor cavalry horses fared still worse than the riders. Scarcely a withered cornstalk could be found

for them, and thousands, exhausted by overwork, famished with hunger, or crippled so that death was a mercy, with hoofs dropping off from frost and mud, fell by the wayside never to rise again. By the time the corps found rest on the Tennessee River it could muster scarcely seven thousand horses fit for service. . . . The cavalry advance-guard, under the active and enterprising Spalding, reached the north bank of the river just as the bridge had been swung to the south side and the last of the rebels were disappearing in the distance."

General Forrest had completed his passage to the north bank of the Tennessee River on the 18th of November, and recrossed on the 27th of December. His own command, as stated before, started with Jackson's division added, and numbered about five thousand effectives. For thirty-five days he was in sharp conflict with the enemy in the most inclement weather, and in a country well-nigh devastated and drained of resources. In the last campaign he captured and destroyed sixteen blockhouses, twenty railroad bridges, destroyed or rendered useless thirty miles of railroad, four locomotives, and about one hundred cars and one hundred wagons. In the same period he captured some eighteen hundred prisoners, one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition, two hundred thousand rations, and nine pieces of artillery, and brought away three pieces of artillery and ten wagons and teams more than he carried in, also many horses; while the loss of the enemy in killed and wounded was estimated at two thousand.

Soon after reaching the south bank of the river, Forrest issued a stirring address to his men, in which he referred to the principal battles in which they had taken part since they left Jackson, Tenn., on the 24th of December, 1863, as fields upon which they had won

fadeless immortality. Continuing, he said: "To sum up in brief your triumphs during the past year: You have fought fifty battles, killed and captured sixteen thousand of the enemy, captured two thousand horses and mules, sixty-seven pieces of artillery, four gunboats, fourteen transports, twenty barges, three hundred wagons, fifty ambulances, ten thousand stands of small arms, forty blockhouses, destroyed thirty-six railroad bridges, two hundred miles of railroad, six engines, one hundred cars, and fifteen million dollars' worth of property. In the accomplishment of this great work you were occasionally sustained by other troops who joined you in the fight, but your number never exceeded five thousand, of whom two thousand have been killed or wounded, while in prisoners you have lost about two hundred." The address closed with an appeal to his soldiers to remember their homes and dead comrades, yield ready obedience to orders, and buckle on their armor anew for the fight.

CHAPTER XIX.

FINAL CAMPAIGN IN 1865.—GENERAL WILSON'S CAPTURE OF SELMA.—THEN THE SURRENDER.—AND GENERAL FORREST'S FAREWELL ADDRESS AT GAINESVILLE, ALA.

General Hood made his headquarters at Tuscumbia, and Forrest's corps was permitted to move toward Corinth on the 29th of December. General Roddey was to protect Hood's rear in the movement toward Cherokee Station, but Armstrong's brigade was soon needed and recalled to assist Roddey. Reaching Corinth, Forrest furloughed the West Tennesseeans under Bell, and all his troops whose homes were not too remote or beyond the Confederate lines. The cavalry not furloughed was sent to Okolona to recuperate. Hood's infantry began to pass through by rail for Tupelo on New Year's Day, 1865. Scouts were sent through the lines to ascertain the movements of the enemy, and General Bell was ordered to return from West Tennessee with his men and recruits by the 25th of January. Ross's brigade was left at Corinth to picket the approaches. Forrest established headquarters at Verona, some fifty-five miles southward, about the middle of January, and employed all the means in his power to gather in absentees and rehorse his men and artillery. He knew full well that the war would soon be over, and so expressed himself to a chosen few, but as a soldier he knew nothing but to obey orders and fight on to the end. The officers who accompanied their men on fur-

lough made several small raids, capturing supplies, horses, and even prisoners, and interrupting navigation on the rivers. About this time, General Sherman in a despatch to Thomas, said: "I suppose Forrest is again scattered to get horses and men, and to divert attention. I would like to have Forrest hunted down and killed, but doubt if we can do that yet." Roddey's brigade, left in the Tennessee Valley in northern Alabama, was soon surprised by a detachment from Wilson's corps, led by Colonel Palmer, and at the same time Hood's pontoon- and wagon-train was destroyed. This involved a loss of eighty-three boats, one hundred and fifty wagons, and four hundred mules. Roddey's troops were reported by General Hood to be at home. By request of General Beauregard all the cavalry of the department was placed under Forrest, who assumed command of the Cavalry Department of Alabama, Mississippi, east Louisiana, and West Tennessee on the 28th of January, 1865.

The troops of different States were reorganized into groups as far as practicable. The Mississippians were placed in Chalmers's division; the Alabamians and Kentuckians in a brigade under Buford; the Tennesseeans under Brigadier-General T. H. Bell, and Ross's Texans under Brigadier-General W. H. Jackson, while McCulloch's Second Missouri was made an independent command to act directly with Forrest. On the 28th of February he received his commission as lieutenant-general, and on the 1st of March transferred his headquarters to West Point, Miss. One abuse and source of weakness which he realized long before he left Corinth was absenteeism, amounting practically to desertion. In passing through north Mississippi, General Hood called Forrest's attention to this growing evil, and on the 14th of January had directed Forrest to "keep picked bodies of cavalry near

at hand that they may be ready to pursue and capture any men that may desert from the army. If the first party of deserters can be promptly caught and punished it will, perhaps, deter others from doing the same."

Nor was this all or the worst. Many men of influence, tiring of real service, had secured authority from department commanders, or the authorities at Richmond, to go within the Federal lines in West Tennessee or western Kentucky and raise regiments or battalions. These in turn would appoint officers of various ranks for recruiting service, under whom the men enrolled managed to keep out of the service, living off Southern sympathizers either by courtesy or force, and dodging alike the soldiers of both armies. Had the Southern Confederacy become an independent government, these men's names would, no doubt, have been handed down to posterity at the head of pension rolls. Forrest appealed to Hon. John C. Breckenridge, Secretary of War at Richmond, to have all commissions of such so-called colonels and captains revoked, and the recreants forced back and into the ranks. But it was too late for the Confederate authorities at Richmond or in the field to reach this class effectually, either by force or sentimental appeals. Other and graver matters already required attention, for the last days of the lost cause were already at hand. None knew or hoped for this more ardently than the " colonels " in the woods and their skeleton regiments of skulkers. Life was sweet to them, and many have lived on to a green old age to " tell the story of battles lost and won."

In the reorganization Chalmers's division was forty-five hundred strong, divided into brigades under Brigadier-Generals F. C. Armstrong, Wirt Adams, and Peter B. Starke. Jackson's division was about thirty-

two hundred strong, and the Tennessee brigades were commanded by Generals T. H. Bell—promoted from colonel to brigadier-general about that time—and Alexander W. Campbell. Ross's Texans were in the latter's brigade. General Chalmers's command remained at Columbus, Miss., until the 17th of March. General Buford was ordered to Montevallo, Ala., to reorganize his division, and remained there until the latter part of March. Colonel McCulloch was thrown out of the command of a brigade which he had exercised so long and so efficiently, and was assigned with his regiment, the Second Missouri, to special scouting service to receive orders directly from Forrest's headquarters. Roddey's force remained detached from duty in north Alabama, and was to be under Buford. Two of Roddey's Alabama brigades—Clanton's and Armistead's—were detached in two directions to guard against a threatened movement. These widely separated commands were never brought together as a compact, effective force. Remaining at Verona until the 1st of March Forrest then transferred his headquarters to West Point, forty-two miles southward. Meantime he had been vigilant, strengthening his forces as well as watching the various movements of the enemy. He was well aware that heavy forces of Union troops had been concentrated near Waterloo and Gravelly Springs, on the Tennessee River, under Major-General James H. Wilson, and also at Memphis, Vicksburg, and near Mobile, as well as at Pensacola, and he foresaw that Wilson would probably strike for the heart of Mississippi or Alabama, and so notified his subordinates. Early in March he had the trees marked on roads leading to Tuscaloosa and Selma, and had a pontoon bridge placed on the Warrior River at Finchs Ferry, and arranged so that the troops should always have five days' rations on hand ready to be cooked at short notice.

Jackson Miss
July 1st 1865

Genl

I am here for the
purpose of making application
to the Pres for a pardon I
find it necessary to first take
the amnesty oath and attach
the oath to the application
and then to have the governors
approval before sending to
Washington Judge Jayne
& Genl Sharkey think the
application should be
made and forwarded as early
as practicable I have arranged
with the Governor to forward

My application for Mr Arnold
advice if you will allow me
to do so that you array and
kind generous humane as early
as practable I have settled for
the present at my plantation
in Coahoma Co Miss have you
I have made have a fine crop
of corn if the season hit will
make a fine crop Mrs F is making
Butter & Raising chickens come
to see us and Bring Mrs Lee
with you if you go to planting
the Miss River is the place
to do so Give my kindest
Regards to Mrs Lee and allow
me to Remain as ever
Your friend &
N.B. Forrest

The Federals could have invaded Forrest's territory with seventy-five thousand troops, including all arms. General Wilson, however, was most dreaded. He was a West-Pointer, an accomplished soldier as well as gentleman, was surrounded by a brilliant staff, and had command of about twenty-seven thousand cavalry, all well equipped and drilled. One division was detached and sent by steamer to Canby, and one dismounted remained in camp. General Wilson, on the 22d of March, with the First, Second, and Fourth Divisions, fourteen thousand strong—all well mounted except fifteen hundred men who were used as escort to the train and given horses as they could be supplied—moved out from his cantonments north of the Tennessee. His three divisions were commanded respectively by Generals McCook, Long, and Upton, officers who were young in years but old in experience, and already noted for courage and high military qualities. The entire command had been carefully selected; all were veterans, and the troopers were armed with Spencer magazine repeating rifles. Each man carried five days' light rations, one pair of extra horseshoes, and one hundred rounds of ammunition. Pack-animals carried five days' rations of hard bread and ten of sugar and salt; while forty-five days' rations of coffee, twenty of sugar, fifteen of salt, and eighty rounds of ammunition were transported on a light wagon-train. The main supply-train consisted of two hundred and fifty wagons, which were to be sent to the rear as fast as emptied. Then there was a canvas pontoon-train of thirty boats, pulled by six mule-teams. A better equipped expedition was never set on foot during the civil war, and General Wilson had unlimited range of discretion. General Canby was moving on Mobile, and Wilson's march in that direction was a diversion. The command moved southward in three columns to

Jasper, the county seat of Walker County, Alabama, and thence to Elyton, Jefferson County, reaching there without opposition on the 29th and 30th of March.

Forrest was well aware of Wilson's movements, but was embarrassed by reason of a reported expedition moving toward Montgomery from the direction of Pensacola. On the 23d he directed Buford to repair to Selma, strengthen the pontoon bridge there, and detach a portion of his command to meet the attack coming from Pensacola. Chalmers was at Pickensville, Ala., and two days before Wilson reached Jasper, Armstrong's brigade and Hudson's battery were ordered to move by way of the pontoon bridge at Finchs Ferry toward Selma. Starke's brigade of Chalmers's division followed the next day. Adams followed next, and Jackson's division was directed to move by way of Tuscaloosa and report upon arrival by telegraph to the lieutenant-general commanding. General Taylor approved of this movement, for in a despatch from Meridian to Forrest on the 26th, he says: "In view of movements from Moulton and Russellville, your order is right. Jackson, with his own and Lyon's command, should meet, whip, and get rid of that column of the enemy as soon as possible."

General Taylor had ordered Forrest to concentrate his available forces upon Selma, but Ross's brigade was still at Corinth; Wirt Adams was on the march from Jackson to Columbus; Bell's and Campbell's brigades, some thirty-two hundred men, were at West Point, and it was thought necessary to leave a brigade to guard the line of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. Hence Forrest could not expect to get ahead of Wilson, who had dropped everything on wheels except artillery, at Jasper, and was moving with great rapidity, and assembled more than sixty-four hundred men in front of that city.

On the afternoon of March 30th, General Wilson, having concentrated his entire command at Elyton—where the city of Birmingham now stands—detached Croxton's brigade, McCook's division, eighteen hundred strong, with orders to proceed to Tuscaloosa to burn the university, which was semimilitary in character, and the other public buildings and stores accumulated there, which was accomplished eventually, but not until the 3d of April. Afterward, Croxton came in touch with the rear of Jackson's division, had a sharp brush and made a detour of forty miles northward of Tuscaloosa and across the Tombigbee River. Finding that he was not pursued, he returned rapidly, captured the small militia force guarding Tuscaloosa and carried out his orders. He only overtook General Wilson at Macon, Ga., in the latter part of May.

Meantime the main movement under General Wilson was pressed forward with the utmost vigor. On the afternoon of March 30th, Upton's division floored the bridge over the little river, at or near Hillsboro, and pressed on to Montevallo, and in the evening encountered a small force of Confederates under Generals Dan Adams and Roddey. Roddey's small division had been to Selma to join in the movement to repel the Federal column coming from Pensacola, but was ordered back fifty miles to Montevallo to join General Dan Adams, commanding militia, and had reached the place by a forced march in one day. Adams and Roddey were easily driven through the town, and the Federal commander destroyed four iron furnaces, a rolling-mill, and five collieries in the neighborhood. The other two Federal divisions arrived next day, the 31st, and also General Wilson. The Confederates rallied, and were again engaged by Upton's division, were soon worsted and driven back toward Randolph to the "Six-Mile Creek," where Roddey was reenforced

by Crossland's small brigade of Kentuckians, who made a very gallant defense, and even returned the charge made by the splendid Federal regiments.

Crossland kept up the unequal contest for some time, but finally had to remount in the face of a charge and retreat as best he could with a loss of about one hundred men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. Falling back, he found and rejoined Roddey's brigade. Forrest, riding rapidly from Centreville toward Montevallo with his staff and escort, came within sight of the road where this conflict had been fought, and saw it filled with Federal cavalry moving southward at a heavy trot. Forming his little command of about seventy-five into fours, he dashed into and through the column, and turning upon the segment northward, drove it half a mile and came upon a heavy line of battle. Changing direction southward he found abundant evidence of the recent fight, including fifteen or twenty dead Federals and ten or fifteen of Crossland's Kentuckians. Capturing a few prisoners he learned particulars of the fight and also the fact that Wilson was south of him, pressing Crossland and Roddey toward Selma. In his own affair in the center of the Federal column he had lost three men. Leaving the road, he made a rapid ride of six or eight miles, finding Roddey and Crossland about ten o'clock at night in front of the enemy near Randolph. Forrest despatched an order to Jackson, supposed to be at Scottsville, to move across to Centreville, attack Wilson's flank, harass him as much as possible, and effect a junction before they were forced into Selma. Reporting to General Taylor at Selma, he learned that Chalmers was twenty miles southward of Randolph, and requested by telegraph that the division be sent to his aid, to delay the enemy in reaching Selma, and give time for concentration there and the removal of stores.

During the night of the 31st, despatches from General Jackson and from Major Anderson, of Forrest's staff, were intercepted, which divulged to General Wilson all of Forrest's important plans and the location of his forces. And on the morning of the 1st of April Wilson took prompt measures to check the steps taken for his undoing. Learning of Jackson's whereabouts, he detached McCook with ample force to prevent an attack in his rear. McCook found Jackson, but not Croxton, as he had expected, captured the small force at Centreville, burned the bridge, and fell back, leaving Jackson on the west side of the river, and preventing him from joining Forrest in the fighting which occurred soon afterward. Forrest learned that Chalmers was not southward on the Plantersville road, as he supposed, but was really northward, moving by a different route to the left.

Wilson was soon aware of the situation and the weakness of the force in his front. He had fully nine thousand men, and could press on to Selma. Forrest was at the front with about thirteen hundred men, including his escort, portions of Roddey's and Crossland's brigades, two hundred men who had been detailed from Armstrong's brigade, and some militia that had been on duty at Montevallo under General Dan Adams. Chalmers sent word that he was making every exertion to reach Dixie Station, a point southward. Jackson was cut off and could not be heard from. Forrest was furious at the slow movement of Chalmers's division. Chalmers was with Starke's brigade, marching eastward, and Armstrong on a parallel road. A despatch from Forrest to Chalmers urging him to reach Plantersville with all haste passed through Armstrong's hands, and without waiting for orders he swept on and reached Forrest just at dark.

In the meantime, April 1st, Forrest had selected a strong position at a crossing on Boglers Creek. There were rugged banks at that point and high ridges commanding the approaches from Randolph and Maplesville. The entire force, not over fifteen hundred men, with six guns, was advantageously placed in line of battle. At four o'clock in the afternoon the Federals came up and resolutely assailed the right of Roddey's position, the advance being made in fine style by a battalion of the Seventy-second Indiana, mounted, with drawn sabers. This created some confusion, but Forrest with his escort dashed to that point of the field and succeeded in restoring the lines, and returned to his artillery in the center. Several Federals were killed and wounded during the charge. Nearly at the same time four companies of the Seventeenth Indiana made a reckless and brilliant charge down the road with sabers high in air. Forrest took position with his escort and Crossland's brigade, and ordered his men to reserve the firing of their rifles until the enemy were within one hundred yards of their position, then to draw their revolvers, one in each hand, and charge in among their assailants.

These orders were obeyed, and a desperate conflict ensued, the Federal troopers using sabers almost entirely and Forrest's men Spencer rifles and revolvers. Forrest and his escort and two companies of Crossland's Kentuckians, under Captain H. A. Tyler, met force with force, and mingled with their gallant foes in a death struggle for victory. Being a conspicuous figure, General Forrest was often recognized at close quarters, and drew the fire and the bright blades of his foemen. On this occasion he was in the center and received marked attention. The charge came on with tremendous force, and the Confederates, in spite of their impetuous counter-charge, were pressed back into very

close quarters. Several troopers singled out the Confederate leader and closed in on him. Five or six were slashing or shooting at him at one time. One of them knocked a pistol from his hand with a saber, but was shot by a Confederate private.

Forrest was wounded in two or three places, though not dangerously, and worsted two or three of his assailants. One of these, more persistent than the others, a young captain, Taylor of the Seventeenth Indiana, was shot dead by Forrest. The general's horse was wounded, but able to carry him away. Captain Boone, of the escort, and five of his men were wounded. The fierceness of the Federal charge can be realized from the following incident: One trooper's horse, perhaps running away, dashed through the Confederate line and, striking the wheel of a gun, broke it from the spindle and was fatally injured; the rider was killed by a single blow of an artillerist with a gun-stick, and another was knocked from his horse. The caissons were carried off, but the section of artillery was abandoned. Some two hundred State troops were lost as prisoners. The Federals lost in the charge twelve killed and forty wounded.* The Confederate loss was only twelve or fifteen.

Adams's men not captured and a part of Roddey's command fled from the field. Forrest with staff and the escort, now under Lieutenant Cowan, made another stand at a creek and checked the advance of a Federal squadron. Roddey, having collected three or four hundred of his best men, was ordered to cover the retreat as best he could, but was soon afterward pressed off the road and the pursuit was kept up vigorously on the road to Plantersville, nineteen miles from Selma. There was a running fight nearly all the way. Mean-

* Rebellion Records, vol. xlix, part i, p. 406.

time General Forrest, suffering greatly from his wounds and chafing at the absence of Chalmers, rode rapidly to that point, where he found General Adams and some of his men. The Confederates had been forced back twenty-four miles since daylight. Forrest had only time to telegraph the state of affairs to General Taylor when the advance of the persistent Union troopers dashed down upon Adams's men, who were drawing rations of forage and subsistence, and drove them away in a panic as quick as they could mount their horses. Forrest, however, rallied his ever-faithful escort, and by prompt use of his Spencer rifles drove the attacking party back on the main body of the advance under General Winslow. This spirited little engagement occurred about sunset, and was the last of that eventful day.

Supposing that Roddey and the rear-guard had been captured, Forrest directed Adams to fall back that night to Selma with his forces, while he with his escort, now greatly reduced by detail for special duty and casualties, would go in search of Chalmers. Five miles westward from Plantersville, on the Marion road, he was surprised to come upon Roddey and his command making their way toward Selma. About 11 P. M. he found Armstrong with his brigade at a halt, awaiting Chalmers, who was supposed to be six or eight miles away, advancing on a bad road which ran through a swamp and was crossed by ugly streams. Armstrong was ordered to hasten on to Selma, and orders were sent to Chalmers to press on in the same direction with Starke's brigade even if he had to abandon his artillery. It was explained afterward that Chalmers's division had been detained in crossing the Black Warrior, and for other unavoidable reasons, and that he had diverged from his intended line of march toward Randolph in the hope of finding better roads for his artillery and

trains. Hence the division was a day later than Forrest expected. The cause of Jackson's apparent tardiness—the burning of a bridge over the Cahaba River, after he had had a sharp and rather successful encounter with Croxton—has already been mentioned. It was 2 A. M. when General Forrest, suffering from his wounds and worn down from hard riding and fighting, paused to give himself and escort a few hours' needed rest.

Rising early on the morning of the 2d, they rode hastily toward Selma, and reached that place at 10 A. M. The town was in a state of wild confusion. Trains of cars filled with stores and prisoners were leaving westward for Demopolis, and steamers at the landing were being loaded with freight to be sent up the river to Montgomery. The streets were full of wagons and drays, the people were greatly excited, and troopers were dashing about in all directions. General Taylor, department commander, was in the act of leaving by rail with a train of ordnance and subsistence supplies, but remained until 2 P. M., and, in leaving, at the urgent request of Forrest, narrowly escaped the rapidly approaching Federal cavalry. Selma, a picturesque little city on the west bank of the Alabama River, and one hundred feet above it, had been up to that time one of the chief centers in the west for arsenals, depots, and ordnance foundries for the Confederate army and navy. The place was protected by a double line of works in the shape of a horseshoe, the points touching the river north and south. The exterior line had a trace of nearly four miles with bastions, ditches, and palisades, requiring a strong force for proper defense. There was an interior line not finished or tenable. The batteries were supplied with only twenty rounds of ammunition, mostly Babbitt shot. Armstrong's brigade, fourteen hundred and

thirty-two strong, was placed on the left or southwest, and in order to fill the space assigned to it the men had to be deployed almost as a skirmish line. Roddey was placed on the right, the militia in the center, and Forrest, with his escort and Kentuckians, took a position to the rear of the militia. The entire force for defense did not exceed thirty-one hundred men rank and file, although Forrest had endeavored to force every free, able-bodied male citizen into the ranks, declaring that all such must go into the works or into the river. With such a mixed command of veterans, militia, and fresh levies, he made a hopeless show of defending Selma against the magnificent force which appeared in his front at two o'clock.

General Wilson had moved out from Plantersville at daylight that morning with Long's division in front, followed next by Upton, and marched directly upon Selma without meeting any opposition, and soon after 2 P. M. his skirmishers were engaged in front of the place. His entire force was present, except Croxton's brigade and McCook's, with La Grange's brigade, which had been detached. Making a careful reconnaissance with division commanders, General Wilson was gratified to find that a sketch furnished him by an English engineer who had been engaged in the construction of the works was entirely reliable. Thus he was, no doubt, better informed as to the plans of the fortifications than General Forrest. Jackson's division, and Chalmers with Starke's brigade, were somewhere in the rear and to the right of Wilson's column. Hence the alert commander, sure now of sweeping all before him, disposed his forces with celerity for a prompt assault. General Long threw out one regiment to protect his horse-holders and pack-trains, and formed the remainder of his division, forty-five hundred strong, in a piece of woodland behind a low ridge in Arm-

strong's front. Upton's division was rapidly placed in position to the left and east—all dismounted except Alexander's brigade.

About 5 P. M. a piece of Armstrong's artillery opened fire upon the Federals forming for assault, and soon after all of Armstrong's artillery opened fire, but without perceptible effect. The enemy quickly brought up a battery and replied rapidly but harmlessly, as their aim was too high. After some apparent delay, the Federals advanced in three lines at half-past five o'clock. Long in person led the charge on Armstrong's brigade, and met with such resistance that he lost over three hundred men killed and wounded in a few minutes, and was himself wounded with two or three of his brigade commanders and four colonels. Upton moved forward at the same time on the center and soon found a gap made by the flying militia. Forrest endeavored in vain to stem the tide of retreat, which left Armstrong's right exposed, until Roddey could be transferred from the right. But the Federals swept on with irresistible force until both Armstrong and Roddey were driven within the second and weaker line of works, where they were soon flanked right and left, cut asunder, and threatened from the rear.

The militia threw away their arms and made good time to their horses. Armstrong withdrew toward the city in regular order but with severe loss. The last to leave was Pinson's First Mississippi Cavalry, the colonel of which was captured with a portion of his regiment. Forrest advised all to get away as best they could, and with his escort and a number of men from different regiments, moved out from Selma on the Montgomery road toward Burnsville, not, however, without an encounter with a Federal force in which he cut down a cavalryman. Armstrong soon followed

with a small force, and likewise cut his way through with forty or fifty of his troopers.

And thus did Selma, which had so long been the granary and arsenal of the Confederacy in the southwest and the objective point of various Federal plans and movements, fall. The Confederates were weakened down and pursued by superior forces, yet if Forrest had succeeded in controlling his forces as planned, and in attacking Wilson in front, flank, and rear as intended, a bloody battle would have been fought and the result can only be conjectured. Wilson outrode Forrest's main command to Selma and took the place by storm without meeting effective resistance. With Forrest's forces well in hand there would have been a different tale to tell, the great tragedy of a bloody and useless battle only a week before the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. Many valuable lives were thus spared by what seemed a merciful mischance in the last days of the Confederacy. Forrest's campaigns were at an end, though he had not surrendered or entirely lost heart. The rest is easily told. The end came soon without any further struggle or important event in the military history of the once invincible cavalry leader and his men.

Riding on in the dark some three miles from Selma with his escort, they heard the screams of women, and advancing to a house found that some Federal stragglers had robbed the ladies of their jewelry and other valuables, and were attempting a greater outrage. The miscreants were speedily slain; and another event of almost similar character occurred later in the night, though General Forrest was not present. General Wilson had issued strict orders as to the conduct of his soldiers, forbidding any to enter houses except with an officer, and then only for legitimate purposes, such as taking necessary supplies. Farther on that night a

squadron of the Fourth Regulars, a regiment noted for fighting and foraging, was discovered camped in a lot near a residence. Forrest's men requested him to remain with the horse-holders while they went forward to capture the party. The Federals were on the alert, and opened fire, wounding Lieutenant Cowan and others, and drove back the Confederates; but the latter rallied, sent around a flanking party, and killed or captured nearly all the men in the lot, some twenty-five in number. The house was afterward burned in retaliation, though the owner, a Mr. Godwin, was several miles away at the time of the fight. Forrest and his escort arrived at Plantersville early on the morning of the 3d of April, where he found a Federal hospital in charge of Dr. McGraw, of General Wilson's staff, with one hundred wounded brought there after the affair at Dixie Station. The courtesies extended by the Confederates were recognized afterward by General Wilson, in an order dated April 8, 1865, in which he says: "Out of the stock . . . select twenty-five horses to be turned over to the Confederate surgeons to replace those taken from them. General Forrest allowed our surgeons to retain their horses, and this is a reciprocal act of courtesy."*

Remaining a few hours to give his worn-out men and animals time for food and rest, he resumed the line of retreat toward Marion, but had gone scarcely a mile when he came in contact with the advance of McCook's brigade. In pursuance of old tactics he promptly charged upon the enemy and killed, wounded, and captured about twenty. But the odds were too great, and he quickly took to the woods by the left flank and made good his escape. Pushing on all night, and crossing the Cahaba River, he reached Marion at

* Rebellion Records, vol. xlix, part ii, p. 272.

10 A. M. on the 4th of April. There he found Jackson's division, Chalmers with Starke's brigade, and the entire train and artillery that he had brought from Mississippi. Having been in the saddle with little rest for seven days and nights, with meager food for men and horses, he called a halt and remained in the neighborhood of Marion about ten days, having no idea of leaving his department to pursue and harass General Wilson, as that officer seemed to apprehend. The war was over.*

On the 15th of April, General Forrest removed his headquarters and force to Gainesville, Ala., where rumors soon began to come of General Lee's surrender. The men were greatly depressed, for they had been imbued with the hopeful spirit and fiery impetuosity of their commander, but Forrest was incredulous and the last to be convinced. On the 25th of April he issued a stirring yet pathetic address to his men complimenting their heroic conduct on many victorious fields, and appealing to them to be patient and do their duty until the truth or falsity of all reports in circulation could be determined, and closed by saying: "Preserve untarnished the reputation you have so nobly won, and leave the results to Him who in wisdom controls and

* "Wilson moved with twelve thousand men, well equipped and well armed. He was an energetic officer and accomplished his work rapidly. Forrest was in his front, but with neither his old-time army nor his old-time prestige. He now had principally conscripts. His conscripts were generally old men and boys. He had a few thousand regular cavalry left, but not enough to even retard materially the progress of Wilson. Selma fell on the 2d of April . . . Macon surrendered on the 21st of April. Here news was received of the negotiations for the surrender of Johnston's army. Wilson belonged to the military division commanded by Sherman, and of course was bound by its terms. This stopped all fighting."—Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, vol. ii, p. 521.

governs all things." Five days later he received word from General Richard Taylor that he had entered into an agreement with General Canby for the cessation of hostilities on the same terms as agreed upon between General Sherman and General Joseph E. Johnston. On the 6th of May an official circular announced the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on the 9th of April, and later the surrender of General Johnston. On the 9th of May, Brigadier-General E. S. Dennis, commissioner to execute paroles, reached Gainesville. General Jackson was appointed commissioner for the Confederates to authenticate muster-rolls and supervise the work. This occupied several days. Duplicate muster-rolls were made out for each commissioner. The men signed the paroles, and the officers were required to sign duplicate obligations. The men, at first greatly downcast, now realized that the long, weary, desperately fought war was over, and were seized with an eager desire to secure their paroles and return to their homes or the places that had been such. General Dennis proved to be a most genial and courteous gentleman who had a comrade-like cheerfulness about him that was contagious. On the day of his arrival General Forrest issued the following address to his troops, characteristic both of the heart and brain of the man:

HEADQUARTERS FORREST'S CAVALRY CORPS,
GAINESVILLE, ALA., *May* 9, 1865.

SOLDIERS: By an agreement made between Lieutenant-General Taylor, commanding the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and east Louisiana, and Major-General Canby, commanding United States forces, the troops of this department have been surrendered.

I do not think it proper or necessary, at this time, to refer to the causes which have reduced us to this extremity; nor is it now a matter of material consequence to us

how such results were brought about. That we are *beaten* is a self-evident fact, and further resistance on our part would be justly regarded as the very height of folly and rashness.

The armies of Generals Lee and Johnston having surrendered, you are the last of all the troops of the Confederate States army, east of the Mississippi River, to lay down your arms.

The cause for which you have so long and so manfully struggled, and for which you have braved dangers, endured privations and sufferings, and made so many sacrifices, is to-day hopeless. The Government which we sought to establish and perpetuate is at an end. Reason dictates and humanity demands that no more blood be shed. Fully realizing and feeling that such is the case, it is your duty and mine to lay down our arms—submit to the "powers that be"—and to aid in restoring peace and establishing law and order throughout the land.

The terms upon which you have surrendered are favorable, and should be satisfactory and acceptable to all. They manifest a spirit of magnanimity and liberality on the part of the Federal authorities which should be met, on our part, by a faithful compliance with all the stipulations and conditions therein expressed. As your commander, I sincerely hope that every officer and soldier of my command will cheerfully obey the orders given, and carry out in good faith all the terms of the cartel.

Those who neglect the terms and refuse to be paroled, may assuredly expect, when arrested, to be sent North and imprisoned.

Let those who are absent from their commands, from whatever cause, report at once to this place, or to Jackson, Miss.; or, if too remote from either, to the nearest United States post or garrison, for parole.

Civil war, such as you have just passed through, naturally engenders feeling of animosity, hatred, and revenge. It is our duty to divest ourselves of all such feelings; and, as far as in our power to do so, to cultivate friendly feelings toward those with whom we have so long contended, and heretofore so widely, but honestly, differed.

Neighborhood feuds, personal animosities, and private differences should be blotted out; and when you return home, a manly, straightforward course of conduct will secure the respect even of your enemies. Whatever your responsibilities may be to government, to society, or to individuals, meet them like men.

The attempt made to establish a separate and independent confederation has failed; but the consciousness of having done your duty faithfully and to the end, will in some measure repay for the hardships you have undergone.

In bidding you farewell, rest assured that you carry with you my best wishes for your future welfare and happiness. Without in any way referring to the merits of the cause in which we have been engaged, your courage and determination, as exhibited on many hard-fought fields, have elicited the respect and admiration of friend and foe. And I now cheerfully and gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to the officers and men of my command, whose zeal, fidelity, and unflinching bravery have been the great source of my past success in arms.

I have never, on the field of battle, sent you where I was unwilling to go myself; nor would I now advise you to a course which I felt myself unwilling to pursue. You have been good soldiers; you can be good citizens. Obey the laws, preserve your honor, and the Government to which you have surrendered can afford to be, and will be, magnanimous.

N. B. Forrest, *Lieutenant-General.*

By the 16th of May about eight thousand officers and men, including six hundred of Scott's Louisiana Cavalry, had been paroled and permitted to return to the peaceful walks of life. After remaining at Gainesville several days after the surrender, to look after the disbandment and comfort of his men as far as possible, admonishing them of the importance and the duty of going home and strictly observing the terms of their paroles, and bidding many of them an affectionate fare-

well, General Forrest returned by rail by way of Jackson to Memphis. In a few days he went down to his large plantation at Sunflower Landing, two hundred and twenty-five miles by river below Memphis, and applied himself to the new work of life with the energy that he had ever displayed in peace and in war. With him the war was over, and he accepted the results in the spirit of a philosopher, good citizen, and patriot.

Forrest's Staff-Officers.

Forrest was a military puzzle in the equations of war, a strategist of great resources and enterprise, whether on the aggressive or on a retreat. His general policy was to make his forces appear greater than they really were, and to bring his entire available command into action at one time, leaving it to be supposed that he had reserves near at hand. This audacity often achieved success, where without it he would have inevitably failed. Always taking the lead in the most dangerous places, he infused much of the same spirit into his men, and could make them effective in the wild exhilaration of battle against far greater numbers and higher military training. Then he was quick to detect a weak point, whether in the front or on the flank of his opponents, and always seemed to delight in taking desperate chances. Nevertheless, he was careful of the lives of his men, and never exposed them without seeming to be sanguine that the results would justify reckless daring. Perhaps no leader in the civil war threw himself, his staff, and escort oftener into the thickest of the many fights in which they were engaged.

He was a fine judge of human nature, and made few or no mistakes in assigning officers and men to duty. The lack of early education, which he keenly felt, seemed to quicken his instincts and judgment.

The most of his orders on the field and in camp were dictated to members of his staff, and he was very exacting as to the language used and nice shades of meaning. His numerous orders and addresses are models of clear, vigorous thought and pure English, and compare favorably with the papers of any general on either side in the civil war. His regular staff-officers were as follows:

Major John P. Strange, of Memphis, assistant adjutant-general, who began as sergeant-major of battalion; was commissioned July 21, 1862; was wounded twice; taken prisoner once and held a few months, and, except this period, served with Forrest in a close and confidential capacity until the surrender at Gainesville, Ala. He was a gentleman of polished demeanor and dauntless spirit, and had great influence with his chief. (Dead.)

Major Charles W. Anderson, aide-de-camp and assistant inspector-general. Served throughout the war and now (1902) lives in Murfreesboro, Tenn. He and Major Strange wrote the most of Forrest's orders by dictation.

Major G. V. Rambaut, of Memphis, chief commissary, appointed July 21, 1862; was a great favorite with Forrest owing partly, no doubt, to the fact that he never lost an opportunity to go into a fight. Except for a short time, when held a prisoner of war, as mentioned in Chapter VII, he served on the staff throughout the war. (Died in Memphis, February 29, 1896.)

Major George Dashiell, now (1902) of Memphis, was transferred from Cheatham's division of infantry, reported to General Forrest, January, 1863, as chief paymaster, and served as such for the remainder of the war.

Major C. S. Severson, chief quartermaster, was appointed November 20, 1861, and served on the staff

in every campaign until late in 1864, when he was retired. (Dead.)

Major A. Warren, now (1902) of Memphis, after serving for some time under General Polk, was taken prisoner late in 1863; exchanged at Old Point Comfort; commissioned as quartermaster with rank of major at Richmond; reported to General Forrest early in 1864; succeeded Major Severson, and served actively until the end of the war.

Major Richard M. Mason, of Memphis, who began service in the Quartermaster's Department May 17, 1861, and served under General Polk; was with General Forrest as a quartermaster in the latter part of the war. (Dead.)

Matthew C. Gallaway, of Memphis, aide-de-camp with rank of captain; served with Forrest the last three years of the war.

Captain William M. Forrest, aide-de-camp, served throughout the war on his father's staff. He entered the service when only fifteen years old, and saw as much hard service as any private in the ranks, afterward took a course at the University of Mississippi, and has since lived in Memphis, but early in 1900 went with his two sons to Cape Nome, Alaska.

Dr. James B. Cowan, now of Tullahoma, Tenn. (1902), was Forrest's chief surgeon with the rank of major, and served throughout the war with noted efficiency and distinction.

Captain John G. Mann, of Jackson, Tenn., joined the staff as chief engineer in 1863. (Died in 1899.)

Captain Charles S. Hill, of Mississippi, served as chief of ordnance in the latter part of the war. (Dead.)

Lieutenant Samuel Donelson, of Nashville, served as aide-de-camp on Forrest's staff over two years, and, like all the rest, saw much hard service. Lives now (1902) in Washington, D. C.

Various other officers served from time to time transiently but effectively on General Forrest's staff, but were not enrolled as regular members. There were no ornamental officers about his headquarters and no easy places. All were proud to be with him, and ever ready to endure the greatest fatigue and share the labors and hazards of their chieftain. He was not always a cheerful companion and never an easy master. To be with him meant to obey his slightest wish and conform to his imperious will, especially on hard campaigns and on the danger line. Staff-officers, clerks, and all attachés took guns to go into fights.

At the end of a hard march or after a battle he became morose and unapproachable for a time; but he had remarkable recuperative power, and after a few hours' rest would be up and as busy and genial among his men as if a cloud of doubt or anger had never cast a shadow over his kindly face.

Forrest was a very temperate man. "He once said, in the writer's presence: 'I was never drunk but once in my life. I had observed the antics of a drunken man, and a strange fancy to try a spell of it took possession of me. I got the liquor and drank it one afternoon. What happened as a consequence I do not know, but when I got over the spree I found myself with a burning case of typhoid fever. I promised "Old Master" that if he would let me up from that bed I would never get drunk again. And I never broke that pledge.'" *

* MS. from J. P. Young, in possession of author.

CHAPTER XX.

GENERAL FORREST AFTER THE WAR.—A QUIET, DIGNIFIED CITIZEN.—DEATH AT THE EARLY AGE OF FIFTY-SIX.—SOME REMINISCENCES AND COMMENTS IN REGARD TO HIS CIVIL AND MILITARY CAREER.

When the war closed General Forrest was not quite forty-four years old. He appeared to be still a vigorous man, but the great mental and physical strain through which he had passed no doubt impaired his vitality and shortened his days. Unlike so many of the Confederate leaders, he was not well equipped to enter the field of politics or any of the learned professions. The great majority were men of education, and could appear to advantage upon the forum, while this hero of a hundred battles was conscious of his deficiencies and want of early opportunities. His name was mentioned sometimes in connection with the gubernatorial chair and other honors, but not with his encouragement or consent, for he was content to enter again upon the peaceful pursuits of a private citizen, to share the fortunes and misfortunes of a defeated people. Accepting the situation in its fullest sense, he started life anew. President Johnson granted Forrest an amnesty July 17, 1868, but even this opened no way for him to public life if he had been so inclined, for all ex-Confederate soldiers and Southern sympathizers of legal age to vote in Tennessee had been disfranchised for a period of fifteen years by a constitutional amendment, and their disabilities were not removed until 1870.

A plantation of three thousand acres of tillable land afforded ample scope for the energies of any man, and upon this Forrest went to work with his usual resoluteness. He formed a partnership with Major Diffenbocher, an ex-Federal officer from Minnesota. His old negroes who had been run off to Georgia during the war, and some others whom he had set free before the war, returned to him and became faithful and useful laborers.* A large force of discharged colored soldiers was also employed, but the conditions of labor were so greatly changed that planting was not the same as in former times. An incident serves to illustrate the prevailing state of affairs on Southern plantations:

One day the general, who never failed to respond to a cry of distress, heard a female voice pleading in one of the cabins, followed by loud cries. Rushing to the door, he entered, and found a powerful negro beating his wife with a club and evidently attempting to kill the prostrate woman. He called to the negro to stop, but was not heeded. With one blow of his foot he kicked the fiend off his victim. Recovering himself, the negro seized an ax, and, thoroughly infuriated, turned on the general. The latter was unarmed, and backed toward the door, keeping his eye on the advancing brute. Watching his opportunity he suddenly sprang toward the negro, wrenched the ax from his hands, and sunk the blade by a single stroke in his head. He then returned to his house, and was quickly followed there by a squadron of negro ex-soldiers, who, under a rude, semimilitary organization, had gathered to avenge their comrade's death. As they drew up in front of the house, the general

* Some of these and their numerous descendants yet live in that neighborhood.

suddenly appeared with a pistol in each hand, and sternly shouted: "Halt!" The negroes stopped as if paralyzed. "Order arms!" commanded Forrest, and every gun came down. "Ground arms!" he thundered. Down went the guns on the ground. "Now, men," he said, with unfaltering speech, "get out of this yard or I will shoot the heads off every one of you." These men well knew his marksmanship, and they were simply crushed under the overmastering will-power that had once before single-handed rescued a lawbreaker from a raging mob which was in the act of lynching him, and slunk away to their work without a protest. An examination was held the following day before a negro magistrate and Forrest was acquitted. There was some talk of sending troops down from Memphis to arrest him, but nothing came of it. The negroes on the plantation afterward expressed their approval of the killing, as the one put out of the way was a turbulent, dangerous character whom most of them feared.

While Forrest was still working his plantation and sawmills, the New York Tribune called attention to the fact that Raphael Semmes, former commander of the Alabama, had been arrested on the charge of having violated the laws of nations on the high seas, and called the attention of the Secretary of War to the fact that N. B. Forrest was still at large in Mississippi. Some of Forrest's friends in Memphis, thinking that he might be incarcerated and held indefinitely, sent him a letter of credit and urged him to go to Europe and remain there until the excitement should pass away. Instead of accepting this well-intended advice and kindness, he returned the letter of credit, visited Memphis, called upon the Federal commandant and stated that he was observing the terms of his parole and obeying the laws of the land, and proposed to share

whatever fate might befall the people who had faced the dangers and chances of war with him. The Federal officer politely assured him that he thought there was no occasion for any anxiety, but would advise the general if it became necessary for him to report at headquarters. It was a singular fact that General Forrest was never a prisoner during the war until he surrendered at Gainesville. Nor was he ever indicted or arrested afterward in spite of the flood of charges hurled against him. This speaks well for the magnanimity of the Union generals, who, to a great extent, influenced affairs and politics at that critical period, and stood firm against the popular clamor for retributive measures. Such leaders as Grant, and even Sherman, with all his fierceness of nature when aroused, Sheridan, Hancock, Thomas, Schofield, Stoneman, Kilpatrick, and dozens of others, recognized the military genius of Forrest and gave him full credit for his achievements and most troublesome activity and resourcefulness. Forrest had been so uniformly kind to the many prisoners who fell into his hands that the charges against him as to the Fort Pillow affair were afterward regarded as exaggerations not to be seriously sustained even by a partizan press or in the halls of Congress.

At the end of two years Forrest, who really made Memphis his home as long as he lived after the war, sold out his plantation at Sunflower Landing and also a smaller one in Tunica County, Mississippi, and soon after that he turned his attention to a railroad scheme. Conceiving the idea that a line from Memphis to Selma, Ala., and thence to some point on the Gulf coast, would be of great benefit to his own city and to the people of several Southern States, he took hold of the enterprise with characteristic zeal. It was new work to him, but he had the example and advice of some strong local railroad men and the moral support of

many impoverished Southern people. Shelby County (Memphis) voted a large appropriation to aid the enterprise, and speakers were sent out over the proposed line to ask for other appropriations and the right of way. General Forrest soon brushed these aside, took the field himself, and developed into a strong, effective speaker. Engineers surveyed the line and grading was begun in earnest. Still Shelby County did not respond promptly to the special tax levied to build the road, and subscriptions came in slowly. The people of Mississippi and Alabama wanted the railroad, but the country was devastated, and even then the price of cotton—the only crop that brought any money—began to go down, and merchants hesitated about making advances on growing crops.

Bonds could not be floated anywhere just then on a purely local enterprise as this was, and so it fell through. Hon. Jacob Thompson was sent to Europe to endeavor to float the bonds of the railroad, and after an absence of about six months had concluded arrangements when the panic of 1873 swept over the country and his work failed. General Forrest had risked a considerable fortune upon the undertaking and became personally liable for contracts and supplies, and gave up every dollar he could command. This left him a poor man, and was a great disappointment, not so much on his own account as for others, he being a very liberal man and always ready to help the needy and distressed, especially the old soldiers and the widows and orphans of such. Again he had desired to do something worthy of his name and for his beloved South. The Memphis and Selma Railroad is only a reminiscence, though a part of the graded tracks were afterward utilized by a trunk road running from Memphis to Birmingham and Atlanta.

Without resources or strong combination, and the

country being still in a disturbed condition politically and financially, he could not have done more than he did. This failure was another Appomattox or a Gainesville to him, a decree of hard fate which no strong will-power, or gallant charge, or flank movement, or bugle-blast could change or set aside. Those were dark days for the once fearless leader, and all the more so because many others were involved and the public was not altogether lenient or sparing of criticism, for the star that is going down is never so worshiped as the one rising clear and full of promise. Subsequently General Forrest leased Presidents Island, just below Memphis, the largest island in the Mississippi River, and a large plantation in the northern part of Shelby County, and worked these two places successfully with convict labor, and was so engaged when he died.

A few incidents will serve to illustrate leading traits in the life of this extraordinary man. Several times he interposed to prevent mob violence or the injustice of the strong over the weak. The following statement is condensed from a copy of the Memphis Avalanche of August 26, 1866. That paper it seems had severely criticized a public officer named Wood, but in a subsequent issue the editor disclaimed alluding to a gentleman named M. H. Wood, of the Revenue Department. Still the latter was not satisfied, and sought personal redress from Editor Gallaway, who happened to be at a conference of a Democratic committee at their headquarters. Wood, upon entering the room, became very much excited, and without any words shot the editor through the hand, using a rifled cane, and then fled, shrieking "Murder!" The wound was very painful, and but for the fact that Gallaway's hand turned the bullet, he might have been killed. The friends of the assaulted man were greatly exasperated, and soon had Wood in custody and were handling him in a violent

manner when Forrest came along, and by his interference probably saved the man's life, and thus the incident ended.

General Forrest habitually joined his men when in camp in their sports, such as running, jumping, pitching quoits, playing marbles, etc. He was also very fond of playing checkers. He was at such times most indulgent to his troopers, and even permitted them to take unusual liberties with him, answering their mischievous chatter in the same vein; but he never abated his disciplinary measures when once decided upon.

At West Point, Miss., in March, 1865, he had issued orders that there should be no more gun-firing or horse-racing in camp. The boys rebelled. That night they wasted hundreds of pounds of ammunition. The next day, growing bolder, a party of daredevils rode up in front of his tent and, staking off a quarter course, began racing their horses. The general, with several of his staff, watched the races, even betting on some of the horses. After the race the men drew up in front of his quarters and gave three cheers for General Forrest. They then rode off in triumph, and a short distance away were met by a strong guard, arrested, and carried before the general, who at once had them court-martialed and severely punished. His own son suffered the same penalty as the rest, and carried fence-rails until his shoulders were sore. It may be appropriate to remark, and his only son bears testimony to the fact, that while devoted to his brothers and son and keeping them as near to himself as possible, he never showed any favoritism to members of his family, but seemed rather to make examples of them as if to indicate to others his ideas of discipline and requirements in the service. Otherwise he was a most devoted and affectionate brother and father.

On the retreat of Hood's army from Tennessee,

Forrest's command brought up the rear in support of the rear-guard of infantry under Walthall. As the ragged, scattered, barefoot Confederates approached the Tennessee River, some heavy firing was heard in front. This was two small Federal gunboats firing at Hood's pontoon bridge, but finally silenced by Morton's artillery. Forrest rode rapidly forward and overtook a small train in charge of a quartermaster, of whom he inquired: "Who is that shooting down there, do you know?" "No," the quartermaster answered, "I don't know, but I suppose it may be Old Forrest. He is the only cavalryman I ever heard of fool enough to tackle gunboats." This was soon after the fight at Johnsonville. The grimy, grim-visaged warrior replied: "Well, I know it is not 'Old Forrest,' for that is the name the boys call me." "I beg your pardon, general, but you have changed so much since I saw you at Chickamauga in a new uniform that I did not know you." The general took it good-naturedly and rode on. Along with the quartermaster's train was a private soldier, a mere boy, not a member of Forrest's command, who was riding a big three-year-old ox. Several hours later and far in the night the train reached Forrest's temporary headquarters on the roadside, where a fire had been built. The general, on the alert, as usual, and watching everything, quickly espied the man on the ox and called him to a halt. "What are you doing with that animal?" he asked. "Just riding him, general, to keep from walking barefoot. I belong to your command and lost my horse up there near Nashville." "No you don't. You are not one of my old command, for they captured horses and not cattle from the Yankees. Get down and go ahead the best you can. That steer will make a good breakfast for one of my regiments in the morning." And so it did. The general was sympathetic and kind as possible with

his men, as well as thoroughly practical, and shared with them all their hardships and dangers. Like Napoleon he usually slept on the ground and ate the same rations as his soldiers.

And his kindness extended to foes in distress as well as friends, as one striking incident will illustrate: On the 22d of March, 1864, a short time after the death of his brother, Colonel Jeffrey Forrest, in the battle near Okolona, and after carrying the position in front, the general, in passing a hut over which a hospital flag was flying, was attracted by a cry of agony. Dismounting and entering he found a Federal soldier abandoned by his surgeon, who had left the amputating saw fast in the bone of his leg. The general quickly saturated a cloth with chloroform and applied it to the nostrils of the sufferer, and leaving, sent his surgeon, Dr. Cowan, to complete the amputation, and the man got well.*

The writer remembers to have once seen General Forrest's natural diffidence and tact put to a severe test. It was in 1868 when the colored people gave a grand barbecue at the fair-grounds, five miles east of Memphis. Many overtures of peace and good-will between the races had been made from both sides, and accepted with some mental reservations. On this occasion a number of leading ex-Confederates were invited to attend. General Forrest and Colonel M. C. Gallaway, the fiery editor of the unreconstructed Avalanche and a few others of lesser note, accepted. It was thought to be a good time to put another plank in the bridge across the bloody chasm, if not incidentally to win the late serf and present colored brother over to the Democratic party. The reception of these guests

* Campaigns of General Forrest, by General Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, p. 398.

was something overwhelming. They were given seats of honor on the platform to the right and left of the presiding dignitaries. Some stirring speeches followed prayer, and the rafters quivered back echoes as from an organ loft, while the perfume of fresh cantaloups and well-baked kids and shoats, lambs, and opossums floated up with the voices of hucksters from below. It was an ideal barbecue day, but the distinguished Caucasian visitors were ill at ease, for they were aware that their roasting was near at hand. Presently the master of ceremonies, with an immaculate white shirt-front and a face as black as the dark of the moon, sprang up and introduced Colonel Gallaway as the orator of the day, which was not the fact. Gallaway, a tall, gaunt Catiline of a man, arose, white as a sycamore-tree, and after blundering along in a few remarks which meant nothing in particular, sat down with a perceptible bead on his brow. He was a powerful writer but not much of a talker. Then Forrest was introduced. He squared himself for his work and made a strong common-sense talk, warming up as he proceeded, and evoked some applause from the black sea of upturned faces. Just as he sat down and began wiping his face with a big handkerchief, a beaming colored damsel stepped forward to present him with a magnificent bouquet. She was robust, well-dressed, a picture of smiling health and self-confidence, and made a talk peculiar to the Southern negro dialect not to be imitated. General Forrest arose, remained standing until the bouquet was passed over to him, then, bowing very low, said that this unexpected honor gave him great pleasure; that he had always admired the ladies, was fond of flowers, and would accept these with many thanks. Yet he was manifestly at a great disadvantage, and struggled through the ordeal with painful difficulty. After that the

white visitors were invited down to the barbecue, given a separate table and a great feast, which they enjoyed more than all the oratory of the day.

Early in the seventies, in the days of reconstruction, a serious disturbance occurred in Chicot County, Arkansas, below Memphis, where the blacks largely outnumbered the whites. A colored leader was a former bootblack and steamboat porter of great influence among his people. There had been bloodshed, and a general uprising was threatened. Many families of white people fled to Memphis. The hotels were filled with refugees, and public feeling was inflamed to a high degree. A large meeting was held at the Chamber of Commerce. Men of prominence attended, and were emphatic in expressing their views as to the action that should be taken for the relief of neighbors and friends.

Among others in attendance was the Hon. Jefferson Davis, then a resident of the city. He spoke to the throng in conservative temper and counseled moderation as well as caution. After an hour or more of deliberation, General Forrest came into the hall and listened perhaps ten minutes. The drift of the sentiments expressed was in favor of sending an armed force at once to the relief or succor of the Chicot people. There were many volunteers and numerous leaders as well, all offering to get ready and go at once. When volunteers began to offer their names for record, General Forrest arose and waved his hand, and silence followed. In well-chosen words and terse sentences he said: "Fellow-citizens, I am as ready as the foremost of you to go to the aid of our neighbors in distress. I will go in any capacity and will do my utmost to help the threatened inhabitants against the bloodthirsty and riotous blacks now driving women and children from their homes and destroying prop-

erty by fire, and committing other lawless acts. But let me advise you that we be not too hasty. We had better wait to see whether or not we are wanted. Let us ask the Governor of Arkansas whether he needs the help we have to offer before we volunteer to invade a neighboring commonwealth. It may be that the Governor and his advisers will not brook our proposed interference with the internal affairs of Arkansas. It may be that the Governor can cope with the difficulty with his own people, and that we would be regarded as unwarranted meddlers. Let us send a telegram and find out the attitude we would occupy by going with an armed force unasked into the Chicot district. I am ready to go to-day, but I want the Governor of Arkansas to invite me first. It might be a serious matter to go there, and we might meet an unwelcome greeting."

The wisdom of this forceful speech was at once apparent. Every man in the hall at once coincided with General Forrest's views, which none had previously thought of, although there were men of discretion in the crowd, men of business as well as of other lines. The meeting adjourned almost immediately to await an answer from the Governor. A reply came in due time, and was to the effect that Tennesseeans were not needed to quell riots in Arkansas; hence no further proceedings were required.

This is given on the authority of Captain W. L. Trask, who was at the meeting as a reporter of the Daily Avalanche, then a leading Memphis journal, and it is cited as a proof of General Forrest's celerity of thought in emergencies as well as of the good sense he showed in giving expression to his views. He used good language at the time, and the most polished orator could not have framed more appropriate or more effective words. As Mr. George W. Childs, the Philadelphia editor, said of General Grant while dying at

Mt. McGregor, when he wrote a paragraph regarding the condition of the country to his friend and visitor, General Buckner: "No editorial writer in America, with all his experience, could have said anything better or in fewer words than did General Grant, and he proved himself a master of expression in this one communication far superior to many of our eminent writers." And so with General Forrest, although uneducated in the schools, he was possessed of a master mind and could always grasp an idea or situation, and when necessary express himself in clear and forcible English. His associations were largely with people of high standing in business and professional life, who esteemed his acquaintance as well as his friendship and confidence as a privilege and pleasure.

Commenting upon the Life of General Forrest, written by General Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, which appeared in 1868, Colonel M. C. Gallaway, editor of the Memphis Avalanche, who had served three years on the general's staff, said: "The subject of this biography is no common man, but one of those whom nature designed for command, and to have a conspicuous part in the stirring scenes and terrific encounters through which he passed comparatively unscathed. We have him with us in a respected and useful citizen, unassuming and unpretending, with what we hope will be a long portion of his life yet before him. Although fortune has not waved her banner over him and caused him to represent a great political party in its strife for power and place, it finds him with the same indomitable energy, the same honorable purpose, the same large and capacious heart that first won attention to, and respect for, the gallant young hero before he had ever heard the shrill bugle-call or the tramp of the war-horse."

It was charged a few years after the war that Gen-

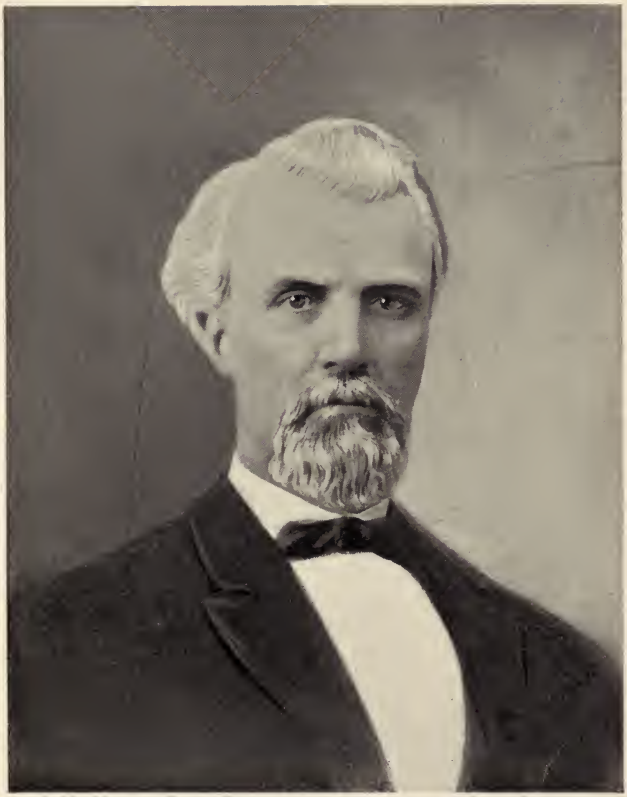
eral Forrest was connected in some way with the original Kuklux Klan, and no authorized denial was ever made. The real history of that mysterious and potent organization has never been and can not now be written, although the ritual has recently been filed with the Tennessee Historical Association at Nashville. The order may not have originated in the now healthful and prosperous city of Memphis, but it was at least welcomed and adopted in the midst of a most distressing state of affairs, which prevailed for some years after the close of the war. Murders and garrotings were of nightly occurrence in the dimly lighted streets and suburbs. Many atrocious crimes were committed which will remain mysteries until the last Great Day. There was a floating population which no census enumerator could have reached or policeman control.

Desperadoes, white and black, especially the latter, still armed, insolent, and recklessly defiant, paraded the streets in squads by day and were a terror to all helpless or law-abiding people at night. Nearly all good citizens went armed, especially if they had to be out after dark. Life was a burden to all who had any interests at stake, or hopes of a better state of society. The metropolitan police force was composed mostly of a rather hard class of rough men, many of them being mere adventurers who had nothing in common with the community. They received their appointments directly from Governor William G. Brownlow, a bitter partizan, who lived more than four hundred miles away, and hence they were obnoxious to a large element of taxpayers and returned Confederates. It must not be inferred, however, that there were not excellent men on the force, some of whom were identified with Memphis and are yet remembered with respect and kindly feeling. Still these and all the agencies of the law were powerless to control the turbulent elements. The

courts could do but little toward bringing the city back to a condition of peace and safety.

Under these circumstances the raw head and bloody bones of the Kuklux began to appear on doors and walls; mysterious lights and signals flashed out in unexpected places. The order had its dens for gatherings and was composed of a resolute set of men, who proposed to do something in their own way toward restoring law and order, and to counteract the nightly drum-beat of negro loyal leagues, which could be heard in a circuit all around the city and the county. One night a grand armed demonstration was made. Every man was veiled as though a Prophet of Khorassan. Superbly mounted and presumably armed, they came and went like ghosts as noiselessly as a caravan on the desert, reaching the center of the city and passing through the principal streets. All was in perfect order; not a word was spoken; the shrouded riders knew their business, and even the horses, draped to the ground, seemed to walk on the air or with muffled tread. The police were on the alert, and one man had the temerity to seize a bridle-rein, but a few six-shooters in his face made him conclude that he was not intended for a horse-holder, so he stepped back and stood at attention. It was a weird-like pantomime procession, the like of which had never been seen since the days of the fantastic Sons of Malta. In less than an hour it was over, and all had vanished in the direction of the neighboring forests.

The chief of police, a daring man named Simon Bolivar Beaumont, started to follow in an open carriage, but was politely informed by a ghostly trooper when out in the suburbs that it would not be healthy for him in the regions down below. So he quietly turned around and drove to the station-house. This show of force produced a salutary effect, especially



Nathan B. Forrest.

From a picture taken in 1868.

upon the colored population, so given at that time to blaring music, street parades, and secret meetings. No violence or disturbance followed this event. The passions and prejudices of the war began to die out, and no one hailed the end with more pleasure than General Forrest. The real Kuklux existed only a year or two, and having accomplished its purpose as far as possible by such means, was disbanded as secretly as it was formed and was heard of no more. That General Forrest was at least an adviser in this movement there is very little doubt, but he and other good Confederates had nothing to do with the so-called or bogus Kuklux Klans which cropped up from time to time afterward, and are even yet counterfeited under different names.

It is due to General Forrest to say, and it will not be questioned by any fair or intelligent critic of his character, that he was ever true to his parole after he returned home, as well as to the laws of the State and General Government, and to the old flag. His courage in battle was fully matched by his intrepidity and sense of honor in all the affairs of life. From his youth up Forrest seems to have had a respect for religious matters, no doubt owing to the teachings of a pious mother. His wife, whom he fairly adored, was a devout member of the church, and had much influence over him. He often said that he attributed his many marvelous escapes in the war to the prayers of his wife and mother. When in camp he always had the chaplain or other suitable person to say grace at meals, and have prayers at night when practicable. And while he would swear sometimes when under excitement, particularly in a fight, when men were not acting to suit him, he was greatly restrained in the presence of ministers and other religious people. Lieutenant-Colonel D. C. Kelley, the famous fighting parson of his old regiment, now of Nashville (1902), gives abundant testimony upon these

points. While living a strictly temperate, moral, and exemplary life he did not become a churchgoer or member until his end was near. A year or two before he died, he met on the streets of Memphis the Rev. Raleigh R. White, of Texas, who had been lieutenant-colonel of the Fourteenth Tennessee Cavalry regiment under him, and not a minister at that time. After greetings, he inquired: "Colonel, what are you doing?" "Preaching the Gospel of the Son of God," the soldier replied. "What! I thought you were in South America or Europe. Tell me about yourself and your work." "Well, I returned some years since," answered White, and proceeded to tell of his conversion and work. As a result of this talk they went into the parlor of a bank near by, where Forrest asked the minister to pray for him. Both knelt, and a fervent supplication was sent up to the throne of grace. They parted, never to meet again. Not long after that General Forrest was accepted as a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, of Memphis, to which his wife had belonged for many years. She was happy in the thought that her prayers had been answered.

For the last year of General Forrest's life his health failed rapidly, and he visited some watering-places without benefit. He could not take an active part in business or social affairs. His last appearance in public was at a reunion of the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry, in which he had enlisted as a private in June, 1861. This was held on the 21st of September, 1877. When called upon for a talk he was sitting on his horse ready to return to the town from the cemetery, and without dismounting, made the following address, which was taken down by a reporter of the Memphis Evening Ledger and appeared in that paper the following day:

"Soldiers of the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry, Ladies, and Gentlemen: I name the soldiers first be-

cause I love them best. I am extremely pleased to meet you here to-day. I love the gallant men with whom I was so intimately connected during the war. You can hardly realize what must pass through a commander's mind when called upon to meet in reunion the brave spirits who, through four years of war and bloodshed, fought fearlessly for a cause that they thought right, and who, even when they foresaw as we did, that the war must soon close in disaster, and that we must all surrender, yet did not quail, but marched to victory in many battles, and fought as boldly and persistently in their last battles as they did in their first. Nor do I forget those many gallant spirits who sleep coldly in death upon the many bloody battle-fields of the late war. I love them too, and honor their memory. I have often been called to the side, on the battle-field, of those who have been struck down, and they would put their arms around my neck, draw me down to them, and kiss me, and say: 'General, I have fought my last battle and will soon be gone. I want you to remember my wife and children and take care of them.' Comrades, I have remembered their wives and little ones, and have taken care of them, and I want every one of you to remember them too, and join with me in the labor of love.

"Comrades, through the years of bloodshed and weary marches you were tried and true soldiers. So through the years of peace you have been good citizens, and now that we are again united under the old flag, I love it as I did in the days of my youth, and I feel sure that you love it also. Yes, I love and honor that old flag as much as those who followed it on the other side; and I am sure that I but express your feelings when I say that should occasion offer and our country demand our services, you would as

eagerly follow my lead to battle under that proud banner as ever you followed me in our late great war. It has been thought by some that our social reunions were wrong, and that they would be heralded to the North as an evidence that we were again ready to break out into civil war. But I think that they are right and proper, and we will show our countrymen by our conduct and dignity that brave soldiers are always good citizens and law-abiding and loyal people.

"Soldiers, I was afraid that I could not be with you to-day, but I could not bear the thought of not meeting with you, and I will always try to meet with you in the future. And I hope that you will continue to meet from year to year, and bring your wives and children with you, and let them, and the children who may come after them, enjoy with you the pleasure of your reunions."

Even then he was weak and emaciated from a chronic disease, and from that time forward he failed slowly but surely. On the 29th day of October, 1877, he peacefully and painlessly passed away at his residence on Union Street, in Memphis, and on the following day his remains were followed to the beautiful cemetery of Elmwood by thousands of people, including the leading citizens of the city and surrounding country, Hon. Jefferson Davis, ex-President of the Confederacy, and members of his cabinet, and many distinguished Confederates from a distance. The pall-bearers were members of his old staff and other prominent Confederates, and the obsequies were conducted under the auspices of the I. O. O. F., of which General Forrest had long been a member. At the close of most impressive ceremonies, a volley was fired over the grave of the great leader by the Chickasaw Guards, afterward a famous local military com-

pany. The casket was lowered to its final resting-place in the family lot shaded by fragrant magnolias, and a few years later his wife died and was laid to rest by the side of her hero-husband. United so long and faithfully and lovingly in life they were not long separated by death.

A movement was set on foot several years ago to erect a monument in Memphis in honor of General Forrest, and in the opening of new parks last year, one of these was named for him. In the center of this, a beautiful ten-acre plat near the hum of the city, the corner-stone for a monument—a bronze equestrian statue of heroic size—to perpetuate his memory was laid with imposing ceremonies during the eleventh annual meeting of the United Confederate Veterans' Association, held in May, 1901. This will be worthy of his name and of the city which was his home in early and mature manhood.

APPENDIX.

GENERAL STEPHEN D. LEE'S ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF HARRISBURG.

Read before the Mississippi Historical Society, January 10, 1902.

COLUMBUS, MISS., *January* 21, 1902.

MY DEAR GENERAL WILSON: I thank you for your letter of January 16th asking me for a copy of my paper read before the Mississippi Historical Society in Jackson, Miss., on the 9th inst. You state that the Life of General Forrest is now passing through the press as one of the Great Commanders Series, and you wish my version of the engagement and will attach it in the Appendix if I will limit my account to one thousand words. I would like to have my entire paper put in if possible, as it is now in condensed form. It will be impossible for me to do otherwise than to bring out clearly my version as in contrast with the other versions, referring to my paper for details and proof.

In the battle of July 14, 1864, General Andrew J. Smith commanded the Union army of fifteen thousand men, including two divisions of the Sixteenth Army-corps, a negro brigade of infantry, eight batteries of artillery, and thirty-two hundred cavalry under General Grierson. He formed his line of battle facing west, Mower's division being on the right of the Pontotoc and Tupelo road, Moore's division on the left of the road, the negro brigade on the extreme left, facing south; the cavalry in the rear and on the right flank, all in double line of battle.

The Confederate troops under General Forrest were dismounted and formed by him as follows: Buford's division of three brigades faced the right and center of the enemy, and Roddey's division the extreme left; while Chalmers's division, with dismounted men, as they arrived, were to form a second line or reserve force, the total effective number being six thousand to six thousand six hundred men with five batteries of artillery. General Forrest dismounted his men and reported ready for battle, and urged immediate attack, as he reported the enemy preparing to retreat on Ellistown road. The extracts in the paper of reports of Forrest and Chalmers, and Roddey's letter, with attached letters, bring out the facts fully—

(1) That General Lee, against his wishes, was on the field in command. Lee urged Forrest to command his troops and exercise command on the field. He positively declined on account of ill-health, and not feeling able to assume the responsibility, saying it was General Lee's duty as his superior officer to come and take command.

(2) The plan of battle was arranged with perfect accord between Generals Lee and Forrest, General Forrest personally selecting the right wing (Roddey), which was to swing around on the enemy's left and drive it in, while General Lee personally would make front attack on center, each to personally supervise their respective wings, and the attack to be made simultaneously.

(3) When the signal-gun was fired to start the movement all the troops moved to the attack, Buford with Crossland's, Bell's, and Mabry's brigades, and Forrest with Roddey's division. Forrest had so far completed his movement that the skirmishers of the enemy on the extreme left were driven in, and before Crossland was repulsed Mabry and Bell pushed up to the enemy, fighting desperately, and to within fifty yards of their line, holding their position two and a half hours.

(4) Forrest, although he was not directly in charge of Crossland's brigade, as soon as he saw it repulsed changed the entire plan of battle perfected by General Lee and himself, withdrew Roddey, and with Crossland formed

a new line of battle, leaving the left wing of the enemy unengaged, and allowing them to concentrate their fire on the troops immediately under Lee.

(5) Lee, when he saw he could not drive in the center of the enemy's line, ordered up Chalmers to put him in on the extreme right of the enemy. Chalmers did not come, so he (Lee) went in person for him; found he had been moved to extreme right by order of Forrest, who did not report to Lee his change in agreement, nor his order to Chalmers to reenforce Roddey, who was doing no fighting.

(6) Lee found Chalmers, and upon his showing Forrest's order, and still supposing Forrest would carry out plan of battle, divided Chalmers's command, sending Rucker's brigade to extreme left to attack enemy, sending Neely to Forrest, as he wanted reenforcements, and holding McCulloch in reserve.

(7) Lee, then seeing the left wing of the enemy unengaged and concentrating their fire on his troops, moved to his right and found Forrest, who then told him what he had done. It was then too late to remedy matters, and under cover of McCulloch's brigade, he (Lee) withdrew Bell, Mabry, and Rucker, and formed a new line of battle and invited attack of the enemy. The enemy did not move out of his chosen position. On the night of the 14th Lee ordered up all troops close to the enemy. On the morning of July 15th he found the enemy retreating, and pursued, attacking rear-guard at Town Creek.

(8) Forrest was evidently disconcerted at the repulse of Crossland, and assumed prerogatives of commander-in-chief, when he only had personally the supervision of right wing. He changed the order of battle and moved reserves without informing the commanding general. The facts are stated as pleasantly and as complimentarily to Forrest as circumstances will permit.

(9) The staff and followers of Forrest were devotedly attached and loyal to him. They almost worshiped him while living, and have continued in the same spirit since his death. They criticized General Lee the night after the retreat of the enemy was reported to him. He (Lee) saw

Forrest, who disavowed the criticism, and said it was his fight, and he would make an example of those who had done the talking. Again at Okolona General Lee called his attention to the conduct of his staff; he became angry and said he would hold them responsible for their words, as they certainly misrepresented him and his actions during the battle. Lee was ordered to another field immediately after battle. Forrest never sent his reports through Lee, although he commanded on the field.

Yours truly,

STEPHEN D. LEE.

GENERAL FORREST'S ORTHOGRAPHY.

IF the despatch sent by General Forrest to announce the capture of Fort Pillow is genuine, it should be embalmed in history along with Cæsar's "Veni, vidi, vici," and the hardly less famous apocryphal message of the British general: "Peccavi—I have Scinde." General Forrest is alleged to have written after the fort was taken: "We busted the fort at ninerclock and scatered the niggers. The men is still a cillanem in the woods." "Ninerclock" explains itself, and "cillanem" is interpreted to read "killing them."

The original of the above despatch, and also another, in which, accounting for prisoners, the general wrote: "Them as was cotch with spoons and brestpins and sich, was cilld, and the rest of the lot was pay rold and told to git," were submitted to the editor of this series in 1887, and by him included in the article on Forrest contained in Appletons' Cyclopædia of American Biography, vol. ii, p. 506. Doubts being expressed by Forrest's friends of their genuineness, General James R. Chalmers was written to on the subject, and he replied as follows: "I do not believe that he wrote the Fort Pillow telegraphic despatch, because the statements are not altogether in accordance with the facts. As to the second, I have no knowledge. In writing, as in fighting, General Forrest was a law unto

himself. His fighting was upon Napoleonic lines, although prompted purely by the genius in him, and his word paintings were equally expressive and vivid. Having had no opportunities for study in early life, he did virtually all his correspondence during the war through Major Strange, his adjutant-general, and the major was a very accomplished man. But I once saw an indorsement from the general that was as unique as those given above. A soldier came to him a third time asking for a furlough. Twice it had been refused, for we needed all the men that we could get at that time, and when the application appeared the third time, General Forrest in his own handwriting indorsed upon the back of it, 'I told you twist (twice) Goddammit know,' and the man knew that he meant no."

The two letters appearing in *facsimile* in this volume are absolutely and unquestionably genuine. One was written in the first year of the civil war, the other, for which the editor is indebted to the courtesy of General Stephen D. Lee, to whom it is addressed, was written after the close of the war. The two doubtful despatches were omitted from the second, and all succeeding editions, of the Cyclopædia of American Biography.

Writing to a friend from Memphis, September 13, 1866, General Forrest says, in reference to the Fort Pillow affair (some slips in spelling are corrected): "I am making out a full statement of the so-called Fort Pillow massacre, and as soon as completed I will send it forward to the President as Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, in which I mention that if my explanation is not satisfactory, I demand an investigation by a board of officers. I am, as well as yourself, ruined by the war, and am opening a commission business in this city."

J. G. W.

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